DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 464 875 SO 033 822

TITLE	The Role of Character Education in America's Schools. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. House of Representatives, One Hundred Sixth Congress, Second Session (Washington, DC, March 1, 2000).
INSTITUTION	Congress of the U.S., Washington, DC. House Committee on Education and the Workforce.
REPORT NO	House-Hrg-106-92
ISBN	ISBN-0-16-060707-8
PUB DATE	2000-03-00
NOTE	114p.
AVAILABLE FROM	U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Tel: 866-512-1800 (Toll Free); Fax: 202-512-2250; e-mail: orders@gpo.gov; Web site: http://www.access.gpo.gov/.
PUB TYPE	Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; *Federal Government; Hearings; Public Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Character Development; *Character Education; Congress 106th; *House of Representatives

ABSTRACT

This publication covers the hearing held on March 1, 2000, in Washington, DC, before the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families of the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives on the role of character education in U.S. schools. The publication contains the following: "Statement of Mr. Michael N. Castle, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth and Families, Representative from Delaware"; "Statement of Mr. Dale Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Michigan"; "Statement of Ron Kinnamon, Coalition Vice-Chairperson, Character Counts! Coalition"; "Statement of Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development"; "Statement of Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director and CEO, Character Education Partnership"; "Statement of Andrew Shue, Co-Founder, Do Something"; "Statement of Sheldon Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson Public Schools"; "Appendix A--The written statement of Michael N. Castle, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Delaware"; "Appendix B--The written statement of Dale Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Michigan"; "Appendix C--The written statement of Ron Kinnamon, Coalition Vice-chairperson, Character Counts! Coalition"; "Appendix D--The written statement of Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director and CEO, Character Education Partnership"; "Appendix E--The written statement of Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director and CEO, Character Education Partnership"; "Appendix F--The written statement of Andrew Shue, Co-Founder, Do Something"; and "Appendix G--The written statement of Sheldon Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson Public Schools." (BT)

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ED 464 875

THE ROLE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 1, 2000

Serial No. 106–92

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and the Workforce

SO 033 822

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 2000

64–659

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402

ISBN 0-16-060707-8

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HEARING ON THE ROLE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

Wednesday, March 1, 2000

House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:30 a.m, in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Michael N. Castle, [Chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Castle, Souder, Greenwood, Petri, Graham, Kildee, Owens, Roemer, Woolsey, Kind, Kucinich, and Wu.

Also Present: Representative Van Hilleary.

Staff Present: Castleman, Office Manager; Pam Davidson, Legislative Assistant; Rob Green, Professional Staff Member; Victor Klatt, Education Policy Coordinator; Sally Lovejoy, Senior Education Policy Advisor; Patrick Lyden, Legislative Assistant; Krisanne Pearce, Professional Staff Member; Reynard, Media Assistant; Jo-Marie St. Martin, General Counsel; Rich Stombres, Professional Staff Member; Staff Present (Continued): Kevin Talley, Staff Director; Bailey Wood, Legislative Assistant; Kim Proctor; June Harris, Education Coordinator; Alex Nock, Legislative Associate/Education; Roxana Folescu, Staff Assistant/Education.

Chairman Castle. Good morning. A quorum being present and being a few minutes late, the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families will come to order. We are holding this hearing today to hear testimony on the role of character education in America's schools under Committee Rule 12B. Opening statements are limited to the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee who is to my right, Mr. Kildee of Michigan, of course.

This will allow us to hear from our witnesses sooner and to help members keep to their schedules. So therefore if members have statements they may be included in the hearing record. With that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open for 14 days to allow member statements and other documents referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record. And that would include any statements, by the way, which you will have submitted also which will be made a part of the record.

Statement of Mr. Michael N. Castle, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth and Families, Representative from Delaware.

I would like to welcome everybody here, particularly our witnesses to this subcommittee hearing in our series to learn more about the many issues associated with the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Today we will focus on character education. Just for edification, although you all may know it, the Elementary and Secondary Act encompasses most of the federal programs that deal with K through 12 education.

In the past, those who helped parents reinforce values in their children, neighbors, coaches, teachers, guidance counselors and many others, wouldn't necessarily have recognized a role as a character educator. It was just something that friends and family did to foster a sense of community among its youngest members. Unfortunately, in an increasingly transient society, where both parents often work, this traditional model has been abandoned.

As a result, it now seems that some children lack the basic values that would not only help them avoid unwanted pregnancies, drugs, alcohol and violence, but also teach them the importance of being respectful and honest. Today every teacher and every student can articulate the consequences of this neglect. The recent rash of school shootings is one example, but so is the low voter turn out among young people and their lack of involvement in community organizations.

As a result, many Americans are looking to character education as one possible solution to the problems that plague our classrooms and our communities. Today's witnesses are attempting to fill the values vacuum that exists in our society. Among other things, these groups are working to help our young people learn about ethical values, moral character and how to contribute to the betterment of society.

In my mind, their job is not about teaching the agendas of the left or right wing of a political spectrum. Their job is about teaching widely accepted concepts of right and wrong. Without a doubt, teaching children about good character is a daunting and complicated task. It is also an issue that raises as many questions as it answers. When schools choose to teach our students about tools and skills necessary to develop good character, the appropriate role of the federal government in such education efforts becomes a key concern.

To that end, we must determine to what extent should the federal government push character education? Can we say that character education is the activity that prevents youth violence? Should we decide which particular character traits should be taught and how should they be taught? And can we effectively measure and evaluate character education programs and how can we tell if they are successful?

I look forward to gathering opinions on these questions from our expert panel of witnesses. Again, I thank everyone for their attendance today. And I will yield to the distinguished Ranking Member from Michigan for any statement he may wish to make.

See Appendix A for the written statement of Mr. Michael N. Castle, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth and Families, Representative from Delaware

Statement of Mr. Dale Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Michigan.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to join with you this morning and welcoming the witnesses before the subcommittee today. Character education and its role in our schools and the effect it can have on our young people is an increasingly important issue. And I know that we are both looking forward to the testimony this morning.

As a former high school teacher, I know that character education can play a very vital role in shaping the lives and values of our children. It is not a new concept, actually. I taught school for ten years and I do believe that even in my Latin classes I was able to inject some character education in those classes. Some did better on character than they did in Latin, but_

(Laughter.)

Mr. Kildee. Character education is not a substitute for good parenting or meant to take the place of good parenting. Rather character education can facilitate or complement the development of a young person's moral character. A recent incidents are excellent examples of, sometimes very tragic examples, of both the need and the benefit of character education and good character among our young people.

The rash of school shootings, one just a mile outside my district yesterday and other incidents of violence in our nation speak volumes about the need for further emphasis on responsibility, good citizenship, understanding, tolerance. Tolerance is certainly a very important part of character education. I taught in an inner-city school which was kind of a microcosm of at least urban America and tolerance is a very important part of that.

Also the success of many of our young people and their contributions to our towns and villages throughout the, through community service, shows how good character can benefit all. In closing, Mr. Chairman, I again stress the importance and value that a strong character education program can have in our schools and communities. Since the young people of today are our leaders of tomorrow, they are all going to have to rely on their good character. And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing this morning.

See Appendix B for the written statement of Mr. Dale Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Michigan.

Chairman Castle. Well thank you, Mr. Kildee.

If you could teach character in Latin, you are indeed a wonderful gentleman, is all I can tell you. It was a difficult subject for me. Let me try to lay out the process a little bit so you are all comfortable with what you may hear or see here as we go on. In a moment, I will take a couple minutes to do a brief introduction of each of you.

Obviously I can't do justice to all you have done, we don't have time for that. We will start with Mr. Kinnamon and we will go to his left and we will go through all five of you. Each of you is to take five minutes. We don't enforce that absolutely rigorously, but we do like to see you try to do it. Your statements will be taken and read by all staff, so your complete statement will be in. The lights will be green for four, yellow for one and then red. When you see the red, if you can really think about trying to come to closure, it would be helpful. Members will come and go; it is the nature of the business. There are a lot of things that are going on here at all times. But after you have completed all of your testimony, we will each be able to take five minutes to ask you questions.

There could be, but probably will not be, a second round of questions, again, because of the pressing nature of the schedule. There may be a vote in the middle of all this; you will hear bells. But when there is a vote we have 15 minutes, so we would not break right away. But if we do break, we will have to break for at least ten minutes. Sometimes there are multiple votes and you just never know what is going to happen with respect to that.

So that is basically what you are going to see. And with that, I am going to do the introductions and I am going to start, obviously, with Mr. Ron Kinnamon, who will be the first witness. He serves as Vice Chair of the Character Counts Coalition and also is Vice President of America's Promising Alliance for Youth. Character Counts is a coalition of educational organizations and students that strive to improve the character of America's youth.

After 38 years of service, Mr. Kinnamon recently retired as Assistant National Executive Director of the YMCA of the U.S.A. He also serves on the Board of the Josephson Institute of Ethics, which is committed to improving the ethical quality of society by changing personal and organizational decision-making and behavior.

Dr. Diane Berreth is the Executive Director of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, ASCD. ASCD is an international, non-profit, non-partisan, education association committed to the mission of forging covenants in teaching and learning for the success of all learners. For countless years she has been involved with character education. From 1995 to 1998, she was a delegate to the annual White House Conference on Character Building for a Democratic Civil Society. From 1993 to 1997, she was President of the Character Education Partnership and most recently advised PBS on a planned documentary entitled Character Education: A Classical Approach.

Ms. Esther Schaeffer serves as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Character Education Partnership. The partnership is a collaboration of organizations of people promoting character education in America's K through 12 school system. Formally she served as an executive with the National Alliance of Business, where she oversaw research and policy development work which focused on identifying trends in public education and the work place and their implications for business and government.

Ms. Schaeffer has authored numerous articles on character education which have appeared in publications of such organizations as the National School Board Association, National Association of Elementary School Principals and Ethics Resource Center.

Mr. Andrew Shue is a community leader and Co-Founder of Do Something, which is an organization that has inspired and trained millions of young people to take action as responsible citizens. Over the past seven years, Mr. Shue has been instrumental in raising millions of dollars to help foster community involvement and in creating strategic partnerships with MTV, Fox Television, Blockbuster Entertainment and America Online. Of particular interest to the subcommittee, Mr. Shue also served as a high school math teacher in Zimbabwe and most importantly, I learned, he was born in Wilmington, Delaware, which is as important as anything else in that bio that we just heard.

And Dr. Sheldon Berman has served as a Superintendent of Hudson Public Schools in Hudson, Massachusetts since 1993. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Character Education Partnership, Educators for Social Responsibility and the Education Commission on the State's Compact for Learning and Citizenship.

Formerly, Dr. Berman founded and served as the President of Educators for Social Responsibility. Dr. Berman has also authored numerous articles on character education and community service.

You are an extraordinarily well-qualified panel. We welcome you here. We are delighted to have you, and Mr. Kinnamon the floor is yours.

Statement of Ron Kinnamon, Coalition Vice-chairperson, Character Counts! Coalition.

Mr. Kinnamon. Thank you very much. It is great to be here. Thanks for mentioning those things I am involved with now. When I retired a year and a half ago from the YMCA I decided it was time to give back and I now volunteer full-time for these various organizations. And it is great because you can say whatever you want, and it just doesn't matter. I recommend it for everyone.

Character Counts, who I am representing today, was created by the Josephson Institute of Ethics in 1992, where leaders of youth-serving organizations came together to come up with a list of common core values that we should be teaching and demonstrating to children, both in schools, but also in all of our youth activities. One of your colleagues, the late Barbara Jordan, was at that meeting and participated in that.

The group came up with six core values or what we call pillars of character. They are not politically, religiously or racially biased, and they are the long-term solution to solving the most pressing problems that face young people today. It seems to me that we spend far too much time as a society on the supply side, far too much time on the supply side rather than the demand side. For instance, on the war on drugs, this was an attempt to keep drugs out of the company and reduce the supply.

We should have been spending equal time on why someone would take drugs and destroy themselves with abusive drugs. And the way you work on the demand side is through character and in teaching basic core values. Things like substance abuse, teen violence, teen pregnancy and so forth. And it is very true that we have been doing these things for a long, long time. We have been developing character and teaching values, but we have not been as intentional as we need to be.

There has not been an organized, systematic plan to do that in schools, in parenting or in other organizations. The values are simple and basic. They are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. And it is important to name the six values rather than just say, teach values. It creates a great strength when you do that. The Character Counts Coalition is made up of a number of very large youth-serving organizations like YMCA and 4-H and Campfire Boys and Girls and the Boys and Girls Clubs and the Red Cross and Larossa (phonetic) and so forth and so on.

Also coalition members are large educational organizations like the American Federation of Teachers and National Association of Professional Educators, the NEA, the National Association of School Boards, etcetera. Whole communities have also become Character Counts Communities. Albuquerque, Knoxville, Akron, Gaithersburg right here, Jacksonville, Florida and Summit, New Jersey and so forth, where the whole communities have come together, all segments committed to teaching and demonstrating these values to the children in their communities.

It wasn't long after this initiative was started that teachers, superintendents, school board members and others realized that it was critical to teach these values and demonstrate these values if we were to have a civil classroom. And that is a critical problem that gets in the way of education. Teachers saw that they were unable to educate effectively if they couldn't control the kids. Obviously, if everyone, students, administrators, teachers, and principals, is operating on a common set of values it will solve this problem.

At the present time there are 156 schools with over a million students attending who are now active members of the Character Counts Coalition. More schools are being added every day. It is a tremendous growth, in fact our largest growth of any organizations are through schools. Sometimes it starts with students, sometimes with teachers, sometimes with the principal, sometimes with a board member.

One way it has been jump started just a couple of months ago, Governor Bush of Texas announced that they were going to give $900,000.00 over the next two years out of the Texas state government to provide training in these areas to teachers and other youth leaders. Now last spring we decided that we needed to do one other thing and that is develop a, we are interested in changing the culture of sports in our society. Now that is

taking on a big one right there, college level and down.

And 23 of the top people in sports, of sports organizations have met, John Wooden and so forth. Hosted by the Governor of Arizona who incidentally is a certified Character Counts Trainer, we met for two and a half days and came up with a code of ethics for sports in our society, called Victory with Honor. And that is being promoted in many places.

With regard to federal funding, I think it is critical to say if it is necessary. I don't think it is; it is going to happen whether you folks give any money or not. It will just speed it up some. If it doesn't, it is sort of a runaway train out there right now. If you do, I think it is critical to the last legislation; make sure it relates to the six values.

And also I think it is critical that it goes directly to schools and not through state agencies, the schools or other organizations. In closing, let me just say that what we really need from leaders in the country, such as yourselves, is we need leadership in character development. We need you to not only act on a set of core values; we need you to encourage this.

We do not have a youth problem in our country; we have an adult problem. And as all of us take on the responsibility to act with good character, we will be there.

Thank you.

See Appendix C for the written statement of Ron Kinnamon, Coalition Vice-chairperson, Character Counts! Coalition.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Kinnamon and we will go to Dr. Berreth next. I hope I pronounced your name correctly.

Statement of Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director, Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Ms. Berreth. You have and I thank you. I would like to thank the committee for your foresight in calling a hearing on this important topic. As Mr. Castle mentioned, I am representing the views of ASCD, a non-profit, non-partisan organization that represents educators in the classroom, at the building level and in higher education. We are a unique organization in that our 165,000 members do not coalesce around any specific professional or role groups. We are united around a single issue, delivering the best, most effective educational approaches in classrooms, in schools and in educational leadership at all levels.

In this regard we frequently seek out and adopt broad-based positions and perspectives on issues facing education today. ASCD is a strong supporter of character education because it helps to unite the two primary goals of education as defined by Socrates over 2,400 years ago. It helps students be good as well as being smart. Since the publication of the landmark report, A Nation at Risk, 17 years ago, school reform has

been high on the agenda of policymakers such as yourselves and educators.

Yet, the reform movement has focused almost entirely on being smart. That is the academic aspects of schooling. The balance and the purposes of schooling have been lost. We can reform schools academically, but if we create a nation of students who do not understand, care about or act on core ethical values, we fail. ASCD's position on character education rests on the premise that students must be prepared to address moral issues in their own lives and to fulfill the moral responsibilities of citizenship.

Schools should make basic moral values, such as justice, altruism and respect for human dignity, a strong unifying theme. All schools should work in partnership with families and the community to develop and implement character education programs. We join the Character Education Partnership in urging Congress to support federal, state, local and school-based approaches to character education.

We specifically endorse the Partnership's three-pronged approach relating to implications for federal legislation. First, to encourage states and districts to take action, but avoid prescribing specific programs or values that they should adopt. I believe that a key to the success of this work is in local control of programs, with each community developing consensus on its own core values and the programs it selects.

Second, to support additional research and evaluation of character education. And third, to provide for a central source of information on best practices and programs. ASCD also supports continuing and expanding the partnerships in character education pilot project program including lifting the cap on the number of grants that can be awarded, extending the number of years that states may receive funding, extending the pilot project to include teacher preparation programs, and providing federal resources for locally-developed professional development efforts for character education including grants to schools and school districts.

In addition, we have identified three critical elements to support effective character education in school-based environments: personalization or human-based scale schooling, expansion for professional development for educators and student involvement and service. The first and perhaps most critical element needed for effective character education programs is human-scale schooling. Smaller classes and smaller schools enable schools to become communities in which teachers and students know and value each other as individuals.

Schools within schools, block scheduling, and mentoring programs all create more opportunities for knowing and caring for each student. Personalization also involves local support through community-based advisory groups. We know these groups can achieve consensus on core moral values across political, religious and socio-economic differences. And it is equally important for policymakers to support initiatives that encourage coordination in character education delivery.

Things such as expanding character education training to all adults in the school, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, aides, they all are a part of the school community. Seeking ways to identify good character and positive role models is important attributes in the hiring of teachers and of all staff. And recruiting, involving and training parents as full partners. They are partners, not only for their school-age children, but they are in fact

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the first moral teacher for every child and the most important.

The second element of an effective program is expanded professional development. Teachers and administrators need training, which they generally do not now receive in pre-service to enhance their leadership, their core pedagogy and their content knowledge. They need specialized knowledge on how to serve as mentors and positive role models as well as how to function as facilitators of moral behavior such as caring and respect.

And finally, educators need curriculum development time to seek teen-based approaches to integrating character education to the curriculum they already teach, and into other parts of the curriculum as well, such as music and art. Finally, students need the opportunity to practice becoming contributing citizens through service to their schools, their communities and each other. The growing service education movement, which some people describe as character education with legs, can contribute to positive learning and re-engagement of youth involvement and civil life of the United States.

In closing, there is broad-based support for character education in schools, across the political, religious and cultural differences that often divide us. Everything we do in schools teaches values, whether by design or default. The question is not should school teach values, but which values and how well will we teach them.

We urge Congress, as well as educators, parents and communities to support and promote character education. And we urge all Americans to seek broader understanding of our shared core values and ways to act upon them for the future of our young people and for our democracy.

Thank you.

See Appendix D for the written statement of Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director, Association For Supervision and CurriculumDevelopment.

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Dr. Berreth, we appreciate your testimony too.

And Ms. Schaeffer is our next witness.

Statement of Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director And CEO, Character Education Partnership.

Ms. Schaeffer. Thank you, Mr. Castle and I am delighted to be here as a representative of the Character Education Partnership to discuss the federal government's role in assisting schools and communities across the country. Briefly, we are a national advocate and leader for the character education movement and provide objective research and resources to those seeking to implement character education, whether they are educators, the community members, the public or policy makers.

As administrators and educators scramble to identify ways to address character development and they scramble even more after incidents like the one that Mr. Kildee mentioned in Flint, Michigan, they are faced with very difficult questions, the most important of which is what are the effective approaches that will work in their schools and their communities. If there is one important message that I can leave with you today, and it ratifies very much a number of the points that Dr. Berreth raised, it is that to be effective, character education is not an add on and it cannot be done in isolation in the schools. It should be infused throughout the entire school curriculum and culture, as described in our 11 Principles of Effective Character Education, a document that was developed by leading character educators who in fact represent a very wide spectrum of philosophical and political points of view and beliefs.

The 11 principles are the ungirting points that are behind recommendations for you today about the federal role. First of all, the federal government should encourage states and districts to take action, but should avoid prescribing specific programs of values that those states should adopt or districts should adopt. The modern character education movement was initially begun through the independent efforts of individual schools and each ended up trying to reinvent the wheel.

The role of the federal seed money has been essential in helping to stimulate state activity and in providing guidance and information sharing for each of those individual schools and districts. Recognizing that federal dollars will remain modest, although we hope increased, CEP recommends that the legislation lift the cap on the number of grants that can be awarded each year. We also recommend that the legislation remove the cap on, or at least extend, the number of years that a state can receive funding.

And you may want to consider some kind of match as the years go on. Additionally, as Dr. Berreth mentioned, the importance of teacher and administrator effectiveness is key and that means they need professional development. We urge that federal legislation underscore the need for training school personnel in character education and encourage state and local education agencies to use federal funds to provide professional development for teachers and other staff.

Our second point, avoiding prescribing specific programs or values, is made for a number of different reasons. While there are a number of key values and Mr. Kinnamon mentioned ones that are certainly very effective and very good (there is nothing wrong with the six), most districts and communities often select different values and they do that after engaging in a process, a fairly inclusive process of school members and community members.

And in doing so, this often helps foster buy in. And as a result, it helps broaden commitment to local character education efforts. For that reason we think it is best for the federal government to allow for flexibility in selecting values to be emphasized by the schools and districts. Very importantly, federal legislation should not mandate or even encourage specific programs or curricula by name. When specific programs have been written into legislation in some states, even as suggestions, schools and districts have felt pressured by the purveyors of these programs to use their materials.

Instead schools and districts should be encouraged to identify their character education goals and then select the programs or curricula that can best enable them to

reach their goals. And in many cases the most effective approaches are ones that are home grown, that are developed within the schools and districts themselves.

The second key point for us is that the federal government should support additional research and evaluation of character education. To date, only very limited resources have been devoted to research in the field of character education. Most research is focused only on specific programs or various elements of character education, such as violence prevention. There has not been an effort to synthesize what is known about successful practices or to fill the gaps in information. These are important national needs and ones that the federal government can best address. Evaluations from the states that are receiving federal funds can be helpful, but they are largely piecemeal assessments of their own efforts and are not rigorous or extensive enough to address the information needs of the field. Far more quantitative and qualitative research is needed.

Our third key recommendation is that the federal government should provide for a central source of information and dissemination on best practices and programs, approaches and curricula. Efforts to develop comprehensive, independent state information systems centers have proven duplicative and inefficient, yet practitioners certainly need information on best practices and available materials. We have found, on our website alone, which has a database, that the number of visitors has increased in just one year from 2,000 a month to 5,000 a month. So I think that helps illustrate the thirst for information. To meet the growing need for information, we urge the federal government to facilitate the development of a consistent, reliable, national information source that is uniformly accessible to all that are seeking information about character education.

In closing, while character education is not a panacea, nothing is. Nothing will stop the Flint, Michigans. It can truly make a significant difference in attitudes and behavior, academic achievement, school culture, peer interaction and parental involvement and it has done so in a growing number of schools.

Character education is creating environments where negative and anti-social behaviors are less likely to flourish or go unnoticed or unreported. Character education is creating schools where children feel safe because they are in an atmosphere that values respect, responsibility, caring and honesty, not because a guard or metal detector is posted at the door. After all, character education is helping to foster in young people what, in the end, counts most, a heart, a conscience and the ability to know that is right and what is wrong. We applaud your attention to this field and look forward to helping you in any way we can as you move forward.

Thank you.

See Appendix E for the written statement of Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director And CEO, Character Education Partnership.

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Ms. Schaeffer for your testimony, too. Mr. Shue.

Statement of Mr. Andrew Shue, Co-Founder, Do Something.

Mr. Shue. Chairman Castle, Congressman Kildee, we are all here today, not for a formality, some time spent with you to talk about character. We are here because we believe, deep in our bones, that this is absolutely necessary. And there is a reason why you guys are sitting up there and we are sitting up here. And that is because you are the leaders. You are the ones who may take the words of the people who may or may not light a spark in all of you, that might light a fire that could spread across our country.

And we believe that this is a movement that needs to be spread. And you can call it character, you can call it whatever you want. You can call it Character Counts or Do Something, whichever programs we all represent. But it all comes down to what kind of life skills are young people going to have. What kind of skills are they going to have to go forward as active citizens? How are they going to treat each other? How are they going to treat their brothers and sisters? How are they going to treat their classmates? After they get slapped in the face, are they going to come in the next day with a gun and shoot one of them? This is a big deal; it is a really big deal. And there is so much talk about all these different things we want to point the finger at and we are not going to sit here and say this is the only answer because we know it is a huge puzzle. But we know that this is working. This is really working.

I can tell you a story about how, in the last six years, we came up with all kinds of different ideas, we did our homework, we did our research and development and the organization Do Something came up with an idea to put a teacher that was responsible for building these life skills in a school. It was a teacher that already works in that school. And we put the word out for these kinds of teachers. And we decided to start small.

We didn't say, okay, we want a whole department, we don't want a whole yearlong curriculum, we just want a two-week curriculum. Let us just do something for two weeks and get kids out there doing things together. We call it the kindness and justice contest. We will bring in incentives so that the kids feel like it is cool and it is fun and it is hip. And we will have the teacher lead it, that one teacher in every school who you would know would be that amazing community coach.

And the response was overwhelming. Using the power of the internet, we spent about $200,000.00, $200,000.00 and we hit 15,000 schools, 20,000 educators and three million kids who participated in a two-week program leading up to the King Holiday where they performed acts of kindness and justice. They went out and learned about right and wrong and learned about compassion and respect and tolerance. And they entered them into the internet and they said what they did and they wrote down why it was important and what it made them feel.

And they came up with things that they could do. They got out and did things and they learned by doing. They learned by doing together. They learned by doing with each other, young people of different backgrounds, different cliques. We brought kids from different cliques together. The success has been extraordinary. Now we have taken this two-week approach and we are starting to spread it into a year-long approach, 150 schools have taken up the year-long program.

And in one school in McCallum, Texas (phonetic), this one teacher who saw this seed get planted now has made a whole department in her school. And now it is not just in her school, it is in every school in that entire district. Now you say, well, you are doing so well with this program with private funding, just keep going, what do you need our help for? Well, unfortunately there is always a school across the street that might not have that great teacher, that might not have that incentive, that might not be so inclined to take out of their budget.

So we need the help of everybody. We need a private/public approach. We want it to be flexible. We want local control and we want to make sure we get the results. And we are getting the results. We have seen them in schools right across the street from each other in Newark, New Jersey where kids' behavior is changing, they are doing their homework, their school is clean, and they have higher morale.

The teachers have higher morale, which is almost most important that they feel the change, they feel the movement. It needs huge attention; it needs your attention. You can't just push this aside and say, oh well, let us worry about the guns, let us worry about the media. Let us get a teacher in every school who is going to building this in that school. This is part of life education. This is about how we are going to treat each other. It is about a five-year old learning when they are a five-year old about how you treat someone so that when they are six years old they might not do something as horrific as we saw yesterday.

I thank you for your attention and I thank you for your leadership and I know that you will take this extremely seriously as you go forward this year.

Thank you.

See Appendix F for the written statement of Mr. Andrew Shue, Co-Founder, Do Something.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Shue. Dr. Berman.

Statement of Dr. Sheldon Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson Public Schools.

Mr. Berman. Thank you, good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address the subcommittee on the federal government's role in strengthening character education, it is an honor to be here. This morning I would like to offer Hudson's Character Education Program as one example of how a community organizes character education and share the powerful results that we have had from our efforts. Hudson is an industry-based culturally and socio-economically diverse community.

Over 30 percent of Hudson's population is Portuguese, many of them immigrants from Brazil or the Azores. We have many bi-lingual students and over 12 percent of our students come from low-income families. We are committed to character education and

have made it core to our education reform program because we believe that it will create knowledgeable, ethical and active citizens. In an era of standards and accountability character education may seem distant from the mainstream of education reform.

However, American education faces a challenge that is equal to that of student performance. Issues of civility, character and respect have taken center stage in many schools and communities. Apathy about and disengagement from the social and political arena are at an all-time high among young people. In addition to raising academic performance standards we need to develop in young people the concept skills and sense of commitment that will revitalize our communities and our democracy.

Each community organizes its character education efforts to correspond to local values and circumstances. For the past six years, the Hudson Public Schools has pursued the teaching of civility, character and social responsibility through instructional strategies focused on the themes of empathy, ethics and service. The school district's mission is to promote the intellectual, ethical and social development of students through a challenging instructional program and a caring classroom and school environment.

Focusing on empathy, ethics and service gives us the opportunity to provide programs that address social development, ethical development and the development of civic competencies all in the context of an academic program. We have sought to embed these three themes into the fabric of each child's academic program and the school experience from pre-school to 12th grade. The programs we have implemented to foster empathy, ethics and service form a complementary and cohesive intervention that has had a powerful impact on our students.

Empathy and conflict resolution skills form the foundation of our program. Through an empathy development and anger management curriculum, as well as conflict resolution training, we have been better able to help our students act with compassion, empathy and sensitivity in reaction to the needs of others and a response to conflict. As a result, we have found a decrease in disruptive behavior and a greater sense of helpfulness and caring among students.

In addition to learning empathy and conflict resolution skills, young people need to find a moral center in themselves and learn how to handle moral conflicts. The great contribution of the Character Education Partnership and the character education movement has been to help adults see that we can come to agreement on such collectively held values as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, justice, fairness, caring and citizenship. To encourage ethical development, Hudson has used an elementary literature curriculum in which students read literature that portrays pro-social themes.

In addition, we have created an ethics-based core ninth grade civics course in which the essential question is, what is the responsibility of an individual in a just society? The course develops students' perspective-taking and social reasoning abilities and students emerge with a greater sense of moral responsibility and a greater commitment to participate in making a difference. Finally, Hudson's Character Education Program gives young people the opportunity to exhibit caring behavior through service learning.

We have developed a comprehensive pre-K to 12 program that now involves over 80 percent of our students in service learning activities each year, through such activities

as first graders working with senior citizens on literacy activities, fourth graders studying and preserving wet land areas and high school physics students sponsoring a science olympiad for elementary and middle school students. Service learning engages young people in meaningful service linked to classroom instruction and is a particularly powerful teacher of good character.

Service learning helps young people make the connection between the subject matter they are studying and issues in the larger world. It not only engages students in action to help others, but also encourages serious reflection on issues they are studying. As a result, it may be our best educational approach to teach responsible and participatory citizenship. Our experience has shown that service learning improves academic performance, helps create a safer and more caring school culture and nurtures ownership and pride in the community.

As a result of our focus on empathy, ethics and service, our Character Education Program has created a more caring and respectful school community. This kind of environment enables more productive and engaging and efficient learning. In fact, character development and academic progress are inextricably connected and mutually supportive. We believe that our Character Education Program has been one of the critical factors in improving student performance.

In closing, I would like to offer four recommendations that would support the development of character education programs nationwide. First, I encourage you to sustain the funding you provided for character education. The Partnerships in Character Education pilot projects have played a critical role in raising the quality and comprehensiveness of character education programs nationally and drawing attention to the importance of character education in the context of education reform.

Second, I encourage you to provide additional funding for research and evaluation of character education programs. A synthesis of current knowledge in this area, as well as new research, would advance our understanding of what programs and interventions are most effective.

Third, I encourage you to refrain from prescribing specific character education programs or a particular set of values. The strength of the current movement in character education has been local involvement in identifying a community's core values and in the selection of programs appropriate to that community. Prescribing a program or a set of values would weaken local programs and community sport for character education.

Finally, I recommend that you increase the funding for Learn and Serve American Program of the Corporation for National Service. This program provides states and school districts with funding for service learning programs. Service learning is a major element in many character education programs across the country. Students learn best by doing and they need the opportunities to care about others and the environment that service learning provides.

I am encouraged that you are holding these hearings on character education. Our challenge is to think of character education as we would any other systemic reform initiative and bring together the resources necessary to create broad-based implementation in our public schools. I applaud your efforts on behalf of character

education.

Thank you.

See Appendix G for the written statement of Dr. Sheldon Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson Public Schools.

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Dr Berman.

Now we are in a perplexing situation where each of us has five minutes. I have got a fistful of notes up here, and I could probably take 50 minutes asking all of you questions. If you could help us with relatively brief answers, perhaps only on or two people commenting on any one question that is asked, unless somebody asks you all to say yes or no to something, that way we can get in more questions and answers. We will go from member to member, alternating sides and here we will start by myself, yielding myself five minutes and start the questioning. And let me just make a comment first, Ms. Schaeffer to you, because I happen to agree with something you said, which is the federal government should be a source for best practices and available materials. It should be a reliable information source. I totally believe that. I believe that in a whole variety of programs, not just this. I just think we should do a better job with our research and evaluation and then dispensing the materials, it bothers me that we don't.

Mr. Shue, specifically for you, because of your unique background of having taught and having been involved in show business a little bit, quite a bit: What is your view of television and its role in all of this? It is evident to me that the present generation watches infinitely more television than previous generations did. And obviously there are all kinds of television, as we all know. But the whole cultural impact of that, some people believe it is substantial, others believe people just watch it and ignore it and it has to do with families and schools and not the whole medium that is television. What is your view on that specific issue?

Mr. Shue. I think it is a huge issue. I think that television is not the only thing. If you want to call it social capital, there is actually a great book coming out on it soon. Just the deterioration of social capital, how we spend time together and how kids will spend hours and hours in front of the television set, how there is not the community spending time face-to-face with people. And when I think of all of these different things that we are working on, it really is about getting people out in the community, doing things together, talking to each other, relating.

And I think that when you say, okay, what are we going to do about it? How are we going to, we are not going to turn off the TV sets, we are not going to stop people from producing all these different shows. But we could come up with creative ways to get young people to want to do something else. And it has got to be interesting, it has got to be exciting, it has got to be fun, it has got to be different.

And that is why it is critical for us to make sure whatever we do and how we build this movement that it is creative and that it comes from the kids. You have got to let their voices say what they want to do. You can't come in and say, oh, you are going to do this, we are going to tell you exactly how to do it and go do it and tell me when you have got it

done. You have got to let them create it. You have to allow them that kind of freedom so that they will want to spend their afternoons and even sometimes their evenings working on these things and not sitting in front of a television set.

Chairman Castle. Thank you. Mr. Kinnamon, I may have this a little bit wrong, you may want to reconstruct it after I, reconstruct my question. But I felt fairly explicitly that we should teach the six values that you have outlined. The others more or less seem to say no, let each community develop its own values or whatever it may be. Is there really a difference here? Or can you help expand that? If you can, hold the microphone as close as possible so that the whole room can share in the answer.

Mr. Kinnamon. Yeah, and that is an issue. Really what it is, it is an issue between quantity and quality. The more you let people choose their own values and do that, the higher quality it is going to be. To reach the number of kids we need to, we think in Character Counts it is very helpful to identify what those values are. Let me tell you an example. I was talking to a group of teachers in a middle school recently who asked this question and said, one of the teachers said, I had a parent come to me and say, I don't know if I want you teaching my kids values.

And I said, well let me tell you, here is what you say. This is exactly what you say. You say, that is great. I am delighted that you are taking the responsibility to teach kids values. That is the way it ought to be and that is what a parent ought to be doing. In fact, I believe in that so much, I will try not to teach any of these six values you don't want me to. And just identify which ones. Is it caring? Is it respect, responsibility and so forth.

No parent does not want their child to have those values. And so what happens? It becomes more inclusive because everybody can buy into it. So it is a trade off, though.

Chairman Castle. Let me ask Dr. Berreth and Ms. Schaeffer and Dr. Berman one broad question and let each of you comment, briefly; we are going to run out of time here. It is sort of a double-broad question; it doesn't lend itself to a brief answer, I might add, so be thinking carefully about this. Are you in programs that you are involved with meeting resistance levels at schools in general, just a comment on that. And then secondly, should we have these individual programs, all of which are totally laudable and, you know, I have heard of some of your programs, I am proud of them and I think you deserve a lot of credit for it.

Or should we be concentrating just as much on making sure that all the personnel in any particular school, all the way from the custodial staff to the nurses to the coaches to the principal to the teachers, whatever it may be, is imbued with the character concepts as opposed to having to bring in an outside group? Two sort of different questions and I realize that these don't lend themselves to brief answers, but we need to keep it fairly brief.

Ms. Berreth. I have been in Oklahoma and Washington state within the last three weeks in some relatively conservative communities and there is almost no resistance. I do believe there are individuals in school communities whose worldviews are so outside those of the large majority that public schooling may not be able to meet their needs. But I believe strongly in an inclusive community process that lets us members of the

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community talk among themselves.

If they can agree on two, fine. And we know that over 98 percent of the American public in a Gallup Poll does agree on honesty, as an example. If they can agree on a larger number, fine. But, if the conversation is inclusive and understanding that communities vary a lot in the religious and cultural make up, then I think that is where the buy in comes in for a large group.

Regarding the question on programs, a community is made up of all its members. And adults behaving consistently on the buses, on the playgrounds, and in the lunch rooms is of key importance because then the program issue comes about in terms of how do I live these values out in my work? What do I do as a custodian that teaches moral values? What do I do in teaching literature that teaches moral values?

Chairman Castle. Thank you. Ms. Schaeffer.

Ms. Schaeffer. I will ratify Diane basically so I will try to be brief. I have been struck by how limited the resistance is. I think probably five or ten years ago it would have been a different story. But for the very reasons that both Diane and Ron have commented, there is not that level of resistance. And I have been across the country; we give awards to schools. And as a result of those awards, they have been in every kind of socio-economic area. There just doesn't seem to be a lot of resistance, particularly when it is done with a certain amount of care.

Okay, your focus on the adults, for us really that is 90 percent of it, quite frankly. And really the state money has done a good job of doing that because it has energized the adults. And to the extent where the states have provided information, some research to help and also all important professional development that is getting at the adults. And I think Diane is absolutely right. When the adults are modeling it consistently and want to, you have really created the climate that you need.

Chairman Castle. Thank you. Dr. Berman.

Mr. Berman. Well, I am going to echo some of the things that Diane and Esther have said. Hudson is a firm believer in getting community input and parent input. In fact we, two years ago, did a survey of all our parents and had about a 40 percent response to that survey. We just surveyed the community on a similar survey and sent out 7,000 pieces of mail and that return, we have just finished analyzed it.

One of the things that we have found is not only do we have no resistance in terms of character education, but we have tremendous support. In fact, wholesale endorsement. One of the things that was fascinating about the survey is that we asked parents to what degree do they value certain indicators of school success? And the first three indicators were all about caring, responsive and safe schools.

The fourth was academically challenging curriculum and methods of instruction. And out of the top 12, in fact nine out of the top 12 related to a caring and responsive environment. When we did the community survey, in which we didn't expect that same kind of response, the two interventions that would make the most significant difference on people's overall satisfaction with the Hudson Public Schools was, one, enhancing academic performance, but the other was in helping the student body become more caring

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towards each other and more caring about the well being of others and the environment.

It is really a shocking result to us because it taught us a lesson that parents want their children to be good kids and good people. And they want the school to facilitate that. And so it is very, very important to them. I don't know if I understand your second question, but let me try to address it this way. What I think you are asking is it a comprehensive approach versus more piecemeal in terms of individual educators?

Chairman Castle. Well, actually it is, should outside groups be doing this or should we be spending our time making sure that the educators themselves are doing it as part of their curriculum, as part of their way of life or whatever it may be?

Mr. Berman. Thank you. I think I do see it as the latter. I think it is fine to have outside groups that are emerging, who are advocates of programs, helping to develop programs. I think it is important to evaluate those kinds of programs and provide support for the development of good character education. However, the investment in schools developing programs, comprehensive programs of their own is what is going to have the direct pay off, and those schools can then reach out to whatever private, non-profits or profits that are out there that are providing programs.

Chairman Castle. Thank you. Thank you all very much and we will turn to Mr. Kildee now.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Berreth, you mentioned the significance of smaller schools and we have heard some testimony on that, particularly after the Columbine situation. The poor Principal there indicated he was not even aware of the fact of the trench coat gang. When I taught at Central High School, it was a fairly large school but generally we were, I was in charge of Teen Club, so I was pretty well aware of the various groups in the school.

One thing about a mega-school is that really only a certain percentage can participate in the various activities, whether it be drama or sports. Whereas in a smaller school almost everyone, maybe, can participated. So you don't maybe have the intolerance towards those who are participating and those who are not. When I taught I always tried to integrate into my Latin class the idea that everyone has worth, whether they be rich or poor, jocks or nerds, gay or straight, that they all had worth. And does the size of a school help a school give that value to people?

Ms. Berreth. Recent research, especially at the secondary level, would tend to suggest that schools in the size range of approximately 800 might do the best job of allowing each adult to have a caring relationship with one young person. That is what we want. Each young person is known well by one adult. We realize at the same time that high schools exist and will continue to exist that serve two to three thousand young people. That is why we look for alternative ways within those high schools, such as schools within the school, to form that relationship.

Your comment I think is very appropriate. The Researcher, Jerry Freiburg, says about 15 percent of our high school students go through high school as citizens. The rest go through as tourists. They are unknown people who pass through the school, if you will, on a temporary visa. And I think a key to our success is changing that relationship so there is not one young person there that someone doesn't know well. That is best

facilitated by smaller schools, but can also be facilitated by rearranging schools. What you did is a good example. The teacher who works with the clubs is a teacher who knows young people.

Mr. Kildee. Anyone else have any comment on that?

Mr. Berman. Yes, let me respond to that. I very much agree with you. The small schools are critical. We are right now in the process of building a new high school and we are about, what will be about 1,200 students. We are dividing our school into clusters of 150 students each where each cluster represents virtually a team. It takes the middle school concept and converts it into a high school program.

That cluster will have a core faculty who will know the students well. It is a way to create small schools within a larger high school. And those are the kinds of initiatives that I think we have to proceed with and encourage. The anonymity of the high school is devastating and we are finding that Columbine and other incidents at high schools that are very large are, well, encouraged by the size of the student body and the anonymity that students feel. So I am very much a supporter of smaller schools and small units within schools.

Mr. Kildee. You know, I think a value education, character education can be done without creating controversy in the community. Some people are very worried they are getting cognitive and affective education, but it can be done. I remember one example I used to use with my students. I would talk about here is this student who goes to work for Kroger's, works after school, able to get some new wheel covers or hubcaps for his or her car and drives to a basketball game and while they are watching the basketball, some freeloader comes out and steals, not just the hubcaps, but steals that person's labor.

And they all could see that that was wrong. So many things we can do that there is pretty well a universal acceptance that these are values that can be, or that I think that the faculty can be encouraged, I think, to integrate this into, I mean obviously every class besides trig. You mention a few things in Latin class, it gives you a lot of opportunity to mention cultural things.

But I think that if you can teach some of those values that are really universally accepted. Mr. Kinnamon.

Mr. Kinnamon. Yes, I agree 100 percent with small schools and so forth. But I want to make the point that it isn't just that a teacher knows a kid. It is that a teacher demonstrates values to the kid and that the teacher is respectful. I was in a group in Maryland during Character Counts week and a group of students formed a Character Counts Club in the high school. And they had a daylong in-service training program for teachers and administrators.

And they used those values. They said, we expect you to respect us and here is what respect looks like to us. We expect you to be responsible, not to try to entertain us, not to try to get on our good side, but be responsible enough to teach us something. Well when you reverse those roles and students become teachers that teach the teachers, it is a very powerful thing.

A few months later they did this also for the school board and for the City Council. Now that is working at changing adults' behavior. And obviously, that is what all of us could use a strong dose of.

Mr. Kildee. Mr. Shue.

Mr. Shue. I just want to make two points which I agree totally on the school size, but I think the key is that there needs to be some structure. If we wait for that great teacher, like yourself, to do it, if we wait for other teachers to take it on because they know it is right to help infuse these values, I don't think it is going to happen to the degree and you are going to end up with the same kinds of kids doing the right thing and the same kinds of kids doing the wrong thing.

There needs to be an approach that brings in the kids who wouldn't normally want to be involved in these kinds of things. And that is why we were talking about bringing outside or inside, clearly a teacher from within the school culture that is respected by all kids. And there is always that teacher. Everybody can look at their own high school or middle school; there is always that teacher. It may be a Guidance Counselor, it may not be. It may be the math teacher or the gym teacher who really has the respect of the community, has the respect of all the teachers and really has the respect of the kids.

And then that is the leader that if you were going to build some structure into it, that could really begin to build a culture in the school where everybody feels included. Where you are getting kids from different cliques involved. And as I said, obviously I feel strongly about get out and do things together which allow you to build all of these different values.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you.

Ms. Schaeffer. I was just going to say that what we have found is that when a school or a community rallies around character development, that it is a unifier which I think is a piece of what you were saying. And it brings people together from very different points of view and different ends of the political spectrum, different religions. And I see that in a microcosm in a way on our Board, where there are people who are quite liberal to quite conservative who have come together and can find commonalities and work together to further the teaching of values.

That it is a unifier and it is something we need as a country very much.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Kildee. Mr. Petri.

Mr. Petri. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess my question is really if you could clarify whether character education or value education is something that should be sort of separate, or is it something that you are trying to permeate the institution and the experience? And in that connection, if it is the second, what can the federal government do to help, realistically?

I mean if we spread too broad a net we could end up basically doing very little. Should we focus on emphasizing a character component in teacher training or

administrator or school board? Should they be sensitized somehow, through some program? And when they are hiring people and promoting people that they give a lot of thought to this subject. It is part of, it has always been part of this. You said Socrates. Are you comparing the noble Romans and the noble Greeks and then drawing morals?

Mr. Weems and George Washington in an effort to try to teach through biography and history has always been, that is what education is. Or should we talk more about athletics, team sports teaches character and you have to abide by rules, you work with others and you work toward a common goal and that is a great metaphor for a lot of democratic living.

And so there are ways of doing this without talking about character and people sort of turning you off, but thinking of strategies that will engage a lot of kids and build these ideas of right and wrong and self-respect and respect for others into people.

Ms. Schaeffer. If I could start? I think what is really important is for it to be comprehensive. What we worry a lot about that people in the schools lull themselves into thinking, oh, we are going to do character education. We are going to take an hour a week or we are going to take ten minutes and we are going to have the children memorize definitions. That will not work and with respect to some of the comments that we have been saying, if the adults are not modeling the behavior, if the children don't see it throughout the school, it really will not do much good at all, if anything.

And in our 11 principles of effective character education, which were put together by CEPs Board, it makes the point of the importance of the comprehensiveness of a character education program. But it is in the whole school clientele. It is subtle, and the way you teach your class whether it is literature or science, it is very easy to talk about values when children are reading a book and doing a book report, instead of a mindless recitation of what was in each chapter, you can ask the class to comment on ethical or moral dilemma that the main character faced.

Could he handle it? What was the impact? Would you handle it the same, why or why not? And you get a lot of very rich discussion. You are fulfilling academic needs but you are also getting at this and without saying we are talking about character ed now. You know, you don't have to do that. And sports was brought up by Ron. Sports are critical. We can destroy a lot of what we do when we have sports programs that are win at all costs without regard to character building.

So it is really looking, what is ideal is when a school looks at everything it does. It says, this is what we are doing that reinforces the kind of character we want. Where are we falling down and what can we do about it? And we found also some districts that have done wonderful jobs at doing this upon behalf of the district, whether it is the central office or the medium person who puts out the library books. It might be most visible when a student walks in.

Whether it is the central office with respect to sports saying to coaches, we need to do this and we need to do it not only with our, the players, but also with the children as they attend. What is proper behavior as attendees? And throughout, you just look at everything you do and you can find ways to reinforce it and that is where the strength is. And where the federal government can play a role, I think, is to encourage that

comprehensive approach. To make resources available so schools can pick and choose from among the various resources that will help them the best.

And very importantly, as I think several of us mentioned that issue of professional development, teachers aren't being prepared to know how to do this. It doesn't sound like it is so hard, but they need help, they need some training. And when the money is available for that kind of thing, it makes all the difference in the world.

Mr. Kinnamon. Yeah, training is clearly the issue, I think. It is the latter; it is the including in everything we do. Let me speak to this sports issue. You mentioned that sports can be a good character developer and it certainly can. But if you look at sports in the United States today you can see that because it is a powerful tool, it can also be a great tool to destroy values.

And if you look the way it has done, particularly the popular sports of football and basketball on a college level and I am not even going to the pros, I don't even want to go there. But on a high school level and a college level, it is a disgrace what is happening. It is doing something wrong in our society too many times, rather than doing something right.

And this new program that has just been in existence six or seven months that has found unbelievable acceptance at all levels. The code of ethics that we have developed has been accepted by the Big Ten, by all of the Chancellors of the universities. We had to get the Coaches, the Athletic Directors and the Presidents and Chancellors together because they are all pointing at each other. And we got them in a room and they have agreed and huge inter-scholastic programs, high school level, have adopted this.

The Olympics, U.S. Olympics will not have any Coach that will, in the future, ever coach in any venue without taking the ethics course that we have just developed for them. So it needs to be integrated into everything we do.

Mr. Berman. I want to confirm that as well, from a little bit of a different point of view. What I see available is a school district when I look at character education programs. I see there are many programs out there that have very good intentions, but in fact are very didactic, are much of preaching to students or looking at a recitation of a value and not deeply embedding it in the culture and curriculum of the school. I think what works best is to have a comprehensive approach and to look at it as much as you would comprehensive school reform.

Now we want to involve as many of the adults, you want to provide the professional development and you want to have it as very much a part of the contents. So for example, the literature you read and you look at the kind of literature and literature programs that are emerging. You may want to have some direct instruction in things like conflict resolution skills, cooperation skills, so that students build a skill-base for the kinds of behaviors that we were looking for.

Even empathy, an empathetic response is a skill that students can learn. But on the other hand, you want to make sure that you are looking at the culture in the school so that you are addressing the issues of sports and clubs and how those all come together. You are looking at the unit size and the kinds of advisor/advisee relationship so that kids have someone to go to and someone to care about. And that kids know each other and that

there is a sense of community there.

And I think that overall, the one thing I would say is that what we are trying to do is change schools, character education is trying to change schools to make them more caring communities. And that in that sense of community, I think we grew up with that sense of community. We have a sense of affiliation, as sense of attachment. And I think our young people don't have that kind of attachment. They don't have a sense of community.

We have grown to be a much more anonymous society. And so that when we look at comprehensive reform of schools, it is how do we redefine what we do so that we are developing the social skills that students have and at the same time create a community that holds them and gives them an experience of what it is to be cared about and to care for others that they can take into the larger environment.

So I would encourage Congress to think about the comprehensive demonstration kinds of models that move on a large scale to look at integrating a variety of approaches into one comprehensive approach.

Mr. Shue. I would just like to say that I agree with everything that man just said.

(Laughter.)

Mr. Shue. I think he is dead on and I think that when you talk about what Congress can do and you talk about we can put the word out and say, we should do this, that is going to be great. But at the same time I really believe there needs to be leadership within that school to build that commitment to building a community. That that comprehensive approach has to come from within that school and I believe we need to create kind of a new position in each school.

And it is not just going to come from the Principal and it is not just going to come from that best Guidance Counselor. I think that there needs to be that call out for that person, who it is going to be, and however they are going to accomplish it, that is their choice. How they are going to figure out, what they are going to pull from other programs, but they know that they are charged with reforming that school.

With coming up with ways to bring kids together to get them to do different things that are going to foster that sense of community. But there has to be that commitment. If you just leave it to the schools to figure it out and you don't come up with a new kind of bold way. Look, we are going to take a hard look at this and we are going to figure it out. It is up to schools to come up with somebody from within the school who is going to take that leadership role. I think it is absolutely necessary.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Petri. Now Mr. Greenwood.

Mr. Greenwood. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This hearing has been a bit of an educational experience for me in terms of my character. There was a group of teenage girls in the back and I assumed that they were some of my CSPAN fans and as soon as Mr. Shue testified they left.

(Laughter.)

Mr. Greenwood. So I have learned the character trait of humility today. When this committee put together a juvenile justice bill to try to prevent kids from, who get in trouble from getting in more trouble, we did it in a bi-partisan fashion. We brought it out onto the floor of the House and then Columbine happened and it got all loaded up with what I thought were fairly hysterical reactions and political reactions to Columbine.

We got into gun shows and we were pounding the Ten Commandments up on the walls of schools in barely, not very well thought out approaches. So we formed a bi-partisan group to actually think about the kinds of things that we could do in a variety of ways that would have a serious impact on kids. And one of the things we did was to look at the role of media, the movie industry, television industry, music industry, etcetera, to see what we might be able to do there that was consistent with the first amendment, and it is pretty hard to do that.

Jack Valenti, of the Motion Picture Academy, came and spoke to our group and I have had a couple of meetings with him, and he had a very specific recommendation. And I want to see what you folks think about it. He said that he thought a good idea would be to use the power of Hollywood with its ability to create imagery and to create emotional impact through film. And to get the studios in Hollywood as a contribution to society to do videos that would illustrate certain character traits like honor and honesty and courage and compassion and responsibility and so forth.

You could do a separate video or film for each one of those traits. And that then we could make that available, perhaps through public or public and/or private funding to make those videos available as a teaching tool, as a curriculum assistance to schools. So my very specific question is multi-faceted. I am a believer in the power of visual images with kids. They are so used to it and sometimes they are less enthralled with the written word or the spoken word and when they see those images, it grabs their attention.

Are there good video materials available that help to illustrate some of these character issues in schools? Are they affordable to schools? Are they being consumed and utilized a lot? Or could in fact Mr. Valenti's suggestion, is it a good one, should we pursue that? And then perhaps using federal funds, try to make those videos available to the schools? And I would be happy to have a response from anyone.

Mr. Kinnamon. I think it is a nice, sweet idea, but it is not an effective idea. Let me give you an actual example of a program that I would put in its place. This is in Albuquerque, New Mexico, a program with kids who had serious trouble in high school. The YMCA pulled these kids into a club called Fade Away, you can call it whatever you want to.

And what they did for a year is they made the videos. And this is what needs to be replicated. And they, in this case, took each of these six values and said, what does it mean to be responsible? And they were the kids talking. And each month when they dealt with the responsibility, then they did a project; they went out and did a project that related to being responsible. They cleaned up a river. When they did caring, they volunteered to do childcare.

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Mr. Greenwood. If I can read between the lines, what you are saying is an active process is more, rather than a passive process.

Mr. Kinnamon. Yeah.

Ms. Berreth. And I would add to that. I agree with the power of visual images. There are some video materials available that do a decent job of this, but I think that given the amount of television that kids watch, I am more interested in what children's television looks like and the funding for it. And there have been several efforts to fund series. Some made it for a period of time, like Ghostwriters, others have not. So quality television programming I think will have more power over time, out of school hours than individual videos.

In-school hours I agree with Mr. Kinnamon that involved work makes a difference. You are really right about the images, but what we are talking about is very long-term work. I mean this is something that needs to start with Kindergartners, from the school's perspective. It starts with birth from the parents' perspective. And it is long, tough work. We need some bells and whistles, but more fundamentally we need to know what quality programs look like.

And they may or may not have video. They may or may not have other elements. And there is, I think, the place for the federal role. Ten years ago, when a lot of us were getting started in this movement,, it was let a thousand flowers bloom, today it is what does quality look like? And that is a place where I think you can play a role.

Mr. Shue. I will say that, well I agree with you guys. That I think images can play a role. I think that heroes can play a role and I think they must. Obviously you have to find the right heroes and the images and the words have to be backed up, I think, by some action. But it is not just, okay, watch the video. But then maybe go out and do something based on what you learned, create your own town hall. Let the kids speak. Just as an example, actually, which I think is fitting and it actually comes from Congressman Castle's district.

Lake Forest High School in Felton, Delaware, at the beginning of the year we found a note on the girls' bathroom wall that threatened to blow up the school. Because of the Columbine tragedy we take this kind of problem very seriously. For this year's kindness and justice challenge we modeled the non-violent philosophy of the Civil Rights Movement. We used the curriculum and watched black and white films of the marches and students began to treat each other with the same dignity and respect they saw in the films.

For two weeks of the program we didn't have any disciplinary incidents. So obviously Dr. King is an incredible hero that they can model themselves after. But I think the idea, if utilized correctly, could be worthwhile.

Mr. Berman. I am very deeply concerned about he media that children are watching and I think media is a very effective tool. And I want to agree with Diane that in fact there is the kind of programming we are seeing on television it is critical to look at ways we can improve and encourage improvement. One of the things I am very conscious of is that children's television was regulated, very well regulated until the early '80's, and we de-regulated children's television.

And since that time, children's television has become much more violent. And so I am aware that there has been a wholesale trend in children's television to commercialism and to violence because in a sense, violence sells. And so in our intervention or Congress' intervention in some way, first amendment rights are really key here.

But for many years children's television was regulated and set in that context and that history we have to look at, what would be appropriate and how can we encourage good programming? What I see is children watching television that has very poor examples, poor role models. Very few of those programs teach conflict resolution skills or demonstrate conflict resolution skills. Many of the conflicts are resolved by hitting someone or killing someone. These are not effective ways to teach and instruct kids.

And so in fact, I think we have to revisit this in a much larger scale and it is not just producing a couple of videos. Although any materials will help, but frankly it is not just that, it is looking at this as a much more systemic issue. What I keep on thinking of is that we have a crisis of character in our children, but I want to return to Ron's comment at the very beginning. I think we have a crisis of character in our society.

That it is our adults who are creating these videos or the films, it is adults who are responsible for the kinds of materials that are on TV. And I am curious about what does that say about our values and who we are as a people and what we want for our children when we commercialize them to such a degree and when we create such graphic images of violence. And I think that is where we need to focus real attention, is on what is happening in the media for children.

Mr. Greenwood. My time has long since expired, but if I could just ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds. When you referred to we used to regulate television for children and then we de-regulated it. My understanding about how that happened was that there was regulation with regard to so-called family hour on television. And there was actually a lawsuit by the Writers Guild that felt that it was being limited in what he could produce and its access to market that through television. They overturned that; it is an interesting history. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Greenwood. Mr. Souder.

Mr. Souder. I usually talk fast and I am going to talk even faster. I am sorry I was late getting over here, I was actually doing a funny juxtaposition because over in the Government Form Committee so far this morning we have heard about money laundering, false IDs going into the White House, destroying records, going overseas to avoid and getting other people to go overseas to avoid testimony and that hearing will be going on for a couple of days.

It is pretty hard not to understand why kids don't understand responsibility when in fact they are seeing it modeled at a terrible level here in Washington. I gave examples in the White House, but there are certainly examples in our party as well. I read through all your testimony. I find myself troubled and let me give you both sides of this. I have been interested in character education for a long time.

Not just because I am a moralist, but partly because I am a moralist, that when I worked for Dan Coates and was the Public and Staff Director for the Children and Family Committee, we actually did a Family Bill, the Family Act that the Republican Conference

adopted in '87 and '88, unanimously that included pilot projects for character education working with Tony Hall and others in the early stages of this.

And I worked and was on the Board for a while at the Thomas Jefferson Institute. I visited character programs in Miami. I have met with the people in Baltimore when they went to the private sector and the Teachers' Association added a half-day to this, or 20 minutes to the school day. They raised $300,000.00 from the community. I have been in Chicago character education programs and St. Louis where they did it a lot different.

And I have had a long-time interest in character education. So don't take anything that I am saying today here as against that. Also in our district we have Character Counts in many of the schools and have been supportive in working with that or anything else. And, with the basic principles, that is most effective when it is developed at the local level, although it is helpful to start with something and then either take off or add to that.

Otherwise you just flounder around in some kind of a general thing. I also want to acknowledge some of things that were in the testimony that I think and we don't often get to talk to each other because we are not here very much, for starters. But I thought that in the testimony from Mr. Kinnamon, your things about the Department of Education website, youth character awards at middle and high school level and Congressional awards, we can do ourselves.

And members of Congress could start this and encourage others in integrating it as we look at drug and anti-crime like we did with juvenile justice and we are doing safe and drug-free schools. I thought that the testimony from Dr. Berreth to support additional research and evaluation is a very tough issue to do that, but we clearly need it.

Several of you mentioned best source of information pilot projects on places to prepare teachers and federal resources for local, professional development efforts that seem to me to be more productive at this point than grants for character education itself. This would be a major change in how we are looking at the legislation or what we do. My feeling is that there are lots of good programs out there and with flexibility and flex grants, there will be more.

Because as we pump out money in safe and drug-free schools and other things, there is going to be money out there. The question is how to infuse it through the curriculum and how to develop and how to get access to that. Because in fact, if the school districts need this money, I mean if they feel they need character and have problems with safe schools and things, they don't, they can raise the money from the private sector.

This is one of the easier ways to raise money from the private sector, is for character programs. I think we could go down a path where most of our money is actually going into the programs. What we need to do is provide some infrastructure to back up the local development. Now I did have a concern develop as I listened to this. And I can see why many people might all of a sudden start to drift away from support for character education and we have to be very careful for this.

Because as a hard core conservative and I am an unreconstructed hard core conservative, in Dr. Berman's testimony, you state that nine of the 12 indicators selected by parents dealt with a caring and responsive environment in the school, I would suggest

that that is part of our problem with our public schools. I spent a full day with Joe Clark years ago in his school. Obviously if teachers are getting raped and students are getting raped, you don't have a safe environment for school.

But partly, part of the problem here is we need to have a stronger and aggressive education environment too. And that as we drift into this kind of feely, touchy, feely, and away from some of what actually develops character, this is controversial to say. I believe that as long as there is sin, we are never going to eliminate it. We should try, but we are never going to eliminate it.

And if you assume that you can't eliminate everything in society, some of what we should be teaching is how to deal with prejudices from other people and how to deal with the fact that in society we are not going to eliminate winning and losing. We are not going to change sports so that there aren't winners. We can eliminate the obsessiveness with it or the violence with it. But at the same time, where I got my character most developed was because I was a separatist Christian and because I couldn't do some of things that the rest of the school did and they didn't cancel the events.

I had to sit alone in a classroom when everybody else went to a movie and my church didn't let me go. And nobody canceled the movie because of my religion. It built character because I had to deal with it. And while some of this is teaching kids how to deal with the fact that there is going to be prejudice in their lives, there is going to be competition. And if we just think that the thrust of character education goes to just how to make everything really comfortable for everybody, as opposed to saying, that is a goal and you should treat people as you want to be treated.

But also, everybody isn't going to treat you that way and how to deal with the problems that they are actually going to be faced with. Otherwise this program is going to wind up becoming something that become irrelevant as soon as they leave the school grounds. And I wanted to throw some of those thoughts at you. I wanted to show also that I thought there were a lot of good ideas today and I think we can develop, and as we look at this, some of the big debates are, do we give it in direct funding or do we give it in developmental?

And I hope I didn't talk too fast. I am sure I drove the poor reporter crazy. Thank you.

Ms. Berreth. May I respond? One of the things that you said that I really appreciate is the importance of a balance in the field we call the hard virtues and the soft virtues. Most of the programs you will see in most communities that select their values balance, for instance, on what we call the soft side, and you called warm and fuzzy, are values like caring and empathy.

At the same time, most commonly you see those in programs that also have respect, responsibility, perseverance, and diligence. And there are hard virtues folks and soft virtues folks; that is why we like to bring them together in the community. And I think Character Counts values show this too. We need a balance. And I think every one of us here would stand for that balance. So we are with you.

Mr. Souder. Mr. Chairman, if I may make one other brief comment. And I realize that and I didn't mean to be over-hard, but I want to make sure we don't lose that in the

academic performance, which is one of the most important things in self-esteem. But the difference in this, and we have talked a lot about action, but to the degree that we can blend this at one school, I have a Johnny Appleseed Award which is partly to highlight people who have, not just students, but a lot of them are adults and examples in the community.

And I gave one to a Student Council President at Garrett High School where they have a Character Counts Program. But it is a drug-free program where what they did was not just sign statements, like many schools have programs where they sign a statement that they post in the school. What they did is they put them on a sign, post them out in front of the school, so everybody in the community saw it and they had a stake then in what they said they were going to do because people could hold them directly accountable. Not just say they were going to be responsible, but there was a method of accountability.

Ms. Berreth. Right, and it is inaction, if you will. The great thing about character is it has three parts that we all agree on here. You have to know the difference between right and wrong. You have to love the right, and then you have to act it out. So character has to do, and the reason this is the term used by the field today is it is habits of action. Habitual, you are habitual behavior. And I think that provides the grounds for your accountability.

Mr. Berman. Let me add in a response. You know actually I very much agree with you. In fact, I think we do have to teach students how to deal with intolerance, how to confront intolerance, how to deal with it when it is happening to them and know that it will, that those kinds of things will not go away. And one of the reasons that, in fact, when I talked about empathy, ethics and service, what I see is empathy and ethics in a sense as the two balancing points in that, if you want to call them hard or soft virtues, whatever it is.

That creates a very significant balance for us. So it isn't that we are creating touchy, feely schools. It is far from that. Frankly I don't think parents would accept that. But what they do want to know is that the child is well taken care of. And they do want to know that the lesson that they are getting is that there are caring adults around them who are not going to abuse them and who are going to represent values that they hold dear.

I think it is, so I don't think that there is that much of a great difference. And in fact, one of the things, although I have talked about character education today, I could be at a hearing as well on comprehensive school reform and academic reform. Hudson has gone from a fairly low performing school district to a fairly strong performing school district in the seven, now eight years that I have been there. And we have transformed the curriculum academically in a dramatic way with using a lot of very powerful materials.

And I happen to believe that we have to demand a lot of students, and then we have to raise expectations significantly. Not only in the area of character, but the area of academics. And expectations mean a great deal and we can not only enable kids to achieve, but we can expect them to achieve at higher levels and facilitate that achievement at higher levels, both academically and in the area of character.

And that is the goal. The goal is to set high standards and to help kids reach high standards. I do want to add one other point, though, and I think it hasn't come out as much here, but I think character is as much about doing as it is about learning. And one of the reasons that we have emphasized service learning in our program is that it is not

enough to have a student know what honesty means or know what caring means.

It makes all the difference in the world for them to engage in some effort that is caring and this is responsible. For example, we have a fourth grade program where our students adopt a wetlands area or a woodlands area near their school. They take care of that woodlands area, they study it in depth, and it is a whole science, yearlong science curricula. Those students know a tremendous amount about the environment and the ecology of an area.

And at the same time they have taken responsible action to clean up that area, they maintain it, they talk to our legislators. Our legislators come in and visit these classes to talk about what is happening in environmental legislation. There is a very strong component of saying we want to look at how we can be responsible adults. But if the action component, realizing these values in action, you, sitting out for, standing on our values is an act of courage and an act of, in a sense, caring about your values.

And that is what you are looking for in young people, is that kind of stand. And it is best by engaging them and doing. That is why in what I was suggesting earlier, it is not only about supporting character education, is actually supporting service learning as well and the work that the Corporation of National Service is doing. It is particularly the Learn and Serve America Funds, which are the funds that fund school districts doing this, that are critically important.

Chairman Castle. Ms. Schaeffer.

Ms. Schaeffer. If I could just comment briefly a little bit on our infrastructure statement because that is critical and in many ways how I have seen the state grants, and I won't say that purely they have gone this way, is that they have helped with infrastructure and that is why they are helpful. Because it says to states and the states have to compete for it that we are saying this is important, that is very important because it gets lost. You might not think it will, but it does.

And on top of that, it has caused the states, in many cases, to do some professional development. I don't think they have done enough, but they need it, that is an important part of the infrastructure to promote networking among those that are trying to do it so they are not each reinventing the wheel, trying to struggle with the same thing over and over again.

To provide guidance on how one might approach this in a comprehensive way and not just pull the first thing off the shelf that they might find. So to me that is a key on the infrastructure to the extent that maybe the language isn't strong enough at saying this is what the money should be used for then. I would certainly encourage that it would say that. I would also say that it is very important, I think, for the states to continue to stay in this and, as I mentioned in the testimony, sometimes four years isn't enough.

But what I think you want to do is to have them build the infrastructure and then they support it in the out years or at least begin to support it to some degree in the out years. And the final point is that again an infrastructure one. And that is that I wish character education were not only mentioned in one little place in the ESEA. There are many other places and some of those have been mentioned in the course of today where it

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can mentioned as an allowable activity.

It gives it a little more visibility and it is appropriate. Safe and drug-free schools certainly stands out and yet it doesn't get said very much. And you hear it a little, but lots of times we start with metal detectors and security guards instead of saying one important element is the character development, conflict resolution, etcetera, etcetera. Just to mention it, staff development title, the same thing. It is an allowable activity. Not to set aside separate funds in most cases, but to just say this is important, it should be allowable.

So I would urge, as you look through the whole of the ESEA, given your concerns about this subject and certainly our concerns as a group, that you look for places to just plug it in as an allowable thing to do.

Chairman Castle. Let me thank all of you very much for your presence here today. We have had an opportunity to have a good discussion, I think, and hopefully develop some good questions and answers with some excellent suggestions as to what we should be looking at. And we are all concerned. We all worry a little bit about the role of federal education versus state and local, as you can imagine, and what a not-for-profit entity can do versus what we should be doing in the schools.

And this all has some of those elements to it, so we appreciate hearing your testimony a great deal. I know the people have to come sometimes from a long ways away to get here and to sacrifice the better part of their day to be here. We can just run over and vote in three minutes; you have to go aways to get back to wherever you have come from. So we do appreciate that a great deal and I would like to thank you. I would like to give Mr. Kildee an opportunity to close.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Chairman and I, Governor Castle and I were just discussing that we really have assembled here a very knowledgeable and a very helpful panel. And we also, in our discussion here were saying you can't tell who is liberal or who is conservative, which is not always the case when we have hearings here. And that is probably because this issue is not a liberal or a conservative issue, it is a human issue.

And I think all of you really have contributed enormously to this. It has been very helpful to me, personally. I know it has been helpful to this panel and hopefully helpful to the entire Congress so we can be sensitive to this and try to do something very important. But I think you really have told us how we can help children develop good character for their own good and for the good of society and hopefully we can stay in contact with you and I thank all of you, very much.

(A chorus of thank yous.)

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Kildee, and again, thank you, and thanks to everybody else who took the time to be here today. We appreciate it and we hope it was an instructional time for all of us. Thank you very much and with that we stand adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

Appendix A-the written statement of Mr. Michael N. Castle, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood Youth and Families, Representative from Delaware

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL N. CASTLE
CHAIRMAN, THE EARLY CHILDHOOD, YOUTH & FAMILIES SUBCOMMITTEE
BUILDING A NATION OF CITIZENS – THE ROLE OF CHARACTER EDUCATION IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

Good morning. I would like to welcome you to the next subcommittee hearing in our series to learn more about the many issues associated with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Today, we will focus on character education.

In the past, those who helped parents reinforce values in their children – neighbors, coaches, teachers, guidance counselors and many others – wouldn't necessarily have recognized their role as a 'character educator.' It was just something that friends and family did to foster a sense of community among its youngest members.

Unfortunately, in an increasingly transient society where both parents often work, this traditional model has been abandoned. As a result, it now seems that some children lack the basic values that would not only help them avoid unwanted pregnancies, drugs, alcohol and violence, but also teach them the importance of being respectful and honest.

Today, every teacher and every student can articulate the consequences of this neglect. The recent rash of school shootings is one example, but so is the low voter turnout among young people and their lack of involvement in community organizations. As a result, many Americans are looking to character education as one possible solution to the problems that plague our classrooms and our communities.

Today's witnesses are attempting to fill the values vacuum that exists in our society. Among other things, these groups are working to help our young people learn about ethical values, moral character, and how to contribute to the betterment of society. In my mind, their job is not about teaching the agendas of the left or right wing of the political spectrum. Their job is about teaching widely accepted concepts of right and wrong.

Without a doubt, teaching children about good character is a daunting and complicated task – it's also an issue that raises as many questions as it answers. When schools choose to teach their students about tools and skills necessary to develop good character, the appropriate role of the federal government in such education efforts becomes a key concern. To that end, we must determine –

- To what extent should the federal government push character education?
- Can we say that character education is the activity that prevents youth violence?
- Should we decide which particular character traits should be taught and how they should be taught?
- Can we effectively measure and evaluate character education programs and how can we tell if they're successful?

I look forward to gathering opinions on these questions from our expert panel of witnesses. Again, I thank everyone for their attendance today, and I will yield briefly to the distinguished ranking member for any statement he may wish to make.

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Appendix B-the written statement of Mr. Dale Kildee, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, Representative from Michigan.

DEK Statement
ECYF Subcommittee Hearing on Character Education
March 1, 2000

Good Morning, I am pleased to join Chairman Castle in welcoming the witnesses before the subcommittee today. Character education and its role in our schools and the effect it can have on our young people is an increasingly important issue. I know that both of us are looking forward to your testimony.

Character education can play a vital role in shaping the lives and values of our children. Character education is not a substitute for good parenting or meant to take the place of good parenting, rather, character education can facilitate the development of a young person's moral character.

Recent incidents are excellent examples of both the need and benefit of character education and good character among our young people. The rash of school shootings and other incidents of violence in our nation speak volumes about the need for further emphasis on responsibility, good citizenship, understanding, tolerance, and other values and morals that make up good character. Also, the success of many of our young people in their contributions to our towns and villages through community service shows how good character can benefit all.

In closing, again stress the importance and value that a strong character education program can have in our schools and communities. Since the young people of today are our leaders of tomorrow, we all are going to have to rely on their good character. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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Appendix C-the written statement of Ron Kinnamon, Coalition Vice-chairperson, Character Counts! Coalition.

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY AT ABOUT
10:30 A.M. EST. WEDNESDAY. MARCH 1. 2000

STATEMENT OF RON KINNAMON.
VICE CHAIR. CHARACTER COUNTS! COALITION

Subcommittee on Early Childhood. Youth and Families
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives

My name is Ron Kinnamon. I retired in 1998 as the Assistant National Executive Director of the YMCA of the USA. Since that time. I have been volunteering my time with a number of national organizations to help make America a more "kid friendly" society. I serve as the Vice Chair of the Character Counts! Coalition. which is a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.

For the last 1 ½ years. I have served as Vice President of America's Promise. General Colin Powell's organization that is following up on the President's Summit for Youth held three years ago.

I volunteer as a member of the National Advisory Council of the Forum for Early Childhood Organization and Leadership Development and also serve on the Program Committee of the Points of Light Foundation.

The CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition is a nonpartisan. nonsectarian alliance of nearly 400 nonprofit organizations dedicated to strengthening the character of America's young people with a consistent set of ethical values. The values-which are not politically, religiously or racially biased-are called the "Six Pillars of Character": trustworthiness. respect. responsibility. fairness. caring and citizenship.

It traces its origins to July 1992. when the Joseph and Edna Josephson Institute of Ethics brought a diverse group of educators. youth leaders and ethicists-including your former colleague. the late Barbara Jordan-to Aspen. Colorado. to share ideas about character development and to explore ways of working together. Chief among their goals was agreeing on a language of values embraceable by all. regardless of personal background or belief. At the end of three and a half days of discourse. this group endorsed the Aspen Declaration on Character Education. and established language that produced the Six Pillars of Character. About a year later. the Institute founded the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition to put the goals of the Aspen conference into action.

On their own. and in partnership with the Josephson Institute. Coalition members have held community forums to build consensus on core ethical values. They have supported training sessions for public and private school teachers and community leaders. They have retooled existing programs and developed new curricula to impress upon young people the importance of good character.

They have facilitated bipartisan alliances of legislators at the local and national level to proclaim the third week in October as "National CHARACTER COUNTS! Week." From the beginning a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators, led by Senators Pete Domenici of New Mexico and Chris Dodd of Connecticut, have played an important national leadership role in support of the Coalition. The Coalition also sponsors the American Youth Character Awards program.

CHARACTER COUNTS! is by far the largest character education initiative in the nation, reaching more than 1 million students through schools that are formal members of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition. Many more students participate in programs based on CHARACTER COUNTS! in schools that are not formal members of the Coalition. And, even more participate through youth organizations such as 4-H, YMCA, Boys/Girls Clubs and youth sports programs.

CHARACTER COUNTS! is not a single program or doctrine. Rather, it provides the core ethical values for character education with its Six Pillars of Character, and it offers schools, communities and organizations the tools to implement programs that meet their own needs through training, programs, conferences and educational materials.

In 1999, the Josephson Institute, recognizing dramatic erosion in the conduct, on and off the field, of athletes at all levels of sport, started the complementary CHARACTER COUNTS! Sports project. Its genesis was a conference in May in Scottsdale, Arizona, co-sponsored by the U.S. Olympic Committee Coaching Division, where legendary basketball coach John Wooden and a group of 43 college presidents, athletic directors, officials and interscholastic sports administrators met at the "Pursuing Victory With Honor" sports summit. The result was a statement of sportsmanship principles based on the Six Pillars of Character. In a very short time, a surprisingly large number of major sports programs have become signatories to the Arizona Sports Summit Accord and pledged to incorporate the Accord's principles into their organizations' athletic programs. CHARACTER COUNTS! Sports has already begun planning statewide sportsmanship programs with two of the largest interscholastic sports governing bodies, the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) and Texas' University Interscholastic League (UIL). Together, these two state organizations reach more than 1 million student-athletes.

CHARACTER COUNTS! does not view character education as primarily a funding issue for communities, but rather a matter of commitment. We do, however, believe that a Federal character education grant program could be productive if it were to include:

- Effective mechanisms to ensuring that grant recipients are focusing on the six core elements of character.
- Providing alternative sources of grant funds directly to schools and community organizations to allow them to implement character development initiatives across all sectors of a community.
- Establishing a clearinghouse to collect and make widely available successful examples of curricula materials and programs.

- A specifically requiring that all grants include funds for evaluation of impact.
- Special grants earmarked for development of evaluation instruments focusing on student, teacher and parent responses and on actual attitude and behavioral changes in terms of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.
- Designating a portion of the funds to go to sports programs.
- Allowing sports grants to go directly to statewide interscholastic associations and major youth groups (e.g. YMCA, AYSO, Boys/Girls Clubs).
- Designating a portion of funds for teacher and sports-coach training.
- Establishing a Department of Education website devoted to character education.
- Support of American Youth Character Awards at every middle and high school and establishment of a Congressional Award for character-building programs and individual character builders.
- Integrating character development into federal programs by requiring that anti-drug and anti-crime programs, and programs focused on youth and families allocate a portion of funds to character development training and programs, and that these programs integrate specific character development components and hold funding recipients accountable to demonstrate what they did.

While some of these recommendations exceed the scope of the particular grant program being discussed here today, we believe that a thorough examination of the federal role in promoting character education should examine all of these issues.

# # #

For information on CHARACTERCOUNTS! Visit our website at www.charactercounts.org or call Julie Dwyer, National Director, CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, at 1-800-711-2670.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: RON KINNAMON

	Yes	No
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?		X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	X	

3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997:

THE JOSEPHSON INSTITUTE OF ETHICS HAS BEEN RECEIVED GRANTS, BUT NOT RECEIVED, MONEY DIRECTLY FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS TO IMPLEMENT CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THAT STATE.

4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

THE JOSEPHSON INSTITUTE OF ETHICS AND THE CHARACTER COUNTS COALITION, WHICH IS A PROGRAM OF THE JOSEPHSON INSTITUTE OF ETHICS

5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4:

I AM VICE CHAIR OF THE CHARACTER COUNTS COALITION AND SERVE ON THE BOARD OF THE JOSEPHSON INSTITUTE OF ETHICS

	Yes	No
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?		X

7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:

SAME AS # 3

Signature: Ron Kinnamon Date: February 26, 98

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

RON KINNAMON

Ron Kinnamon is Vice President for Not-for-Profit Alliance of America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth. In this capacity, he assists not-for-profit organizations to collaborate in providing five major resources to every child in the country. Ron serves as Vice Chair of the Council of Advisors and Advocates of the *Character Counts! Coalition*, a coalition of more than 100 of America's leading youth serving and educational organizations that strive to improve the character of America's youth by teaching and demonstrating six basic values. In addition, Ron does volunteer work for the Points of Light Foundation and Search Institute.

After 38 years of service, Ron recently retired as Assistant National Executive Director of the YMCA of the USA. The YMCA of the USA is the national organization that represents the 2,200 YMCAs in the United States. Prior YMCA assignments have included West Field Executive in San Francisco, South Field Executive in Atlanta, CEO of the YMCA of Greater Miami, and Branch Executive and Camp Director with the Dallas YMCA.

Ron serves on the Steering Committee of *Connect America*, the program of the *Points of Light Foundation* that helped conduct the *Presidents' Summit*. The *Presidents' Summit* is the unprecedented event that brought Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter, Ford, and General Colin Powell together to call attention to solutions for community problems that impact children and youth.

Ron is on the board of the *Josephson Institute of Ethics*. This institute, based in Marina del Rey, California, is committed to improving the ethical quality of society by changing personal and organizational decision-making and behavior.

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Ron is an active speaker on Family Issues. He was a panelist on five PBS television programs entitled *Medically Speaking*. Presenting family concerns, these programs have been shown in the United States, Canada, South America and Europe. He authored *Family Focus*, a parent education course which has trained more than 10,000 parents throughout the country.

He is a member of the *National Advisory Council of The Forum for Early Childhood Organization and Leadership Development*. This council advises the Henry W. Block School of Business & Public Administration of the University of Missouri-Kansas City on matters related to child care and child development.

Ron serves on the *National Retiree Volunteer Coalition Awards Board of Governors*. Located in Minneapolis, this Coalition, assists corporations to encourage their retired employees to volunteer with not-for-profit organizations.

His B.A. was received from Southern Methodist University with a double major in sociology and social science. His Master of Science degree was received from George Williams College with a major in Group Work. Other significant training experiences have been with the American Management Association in New York, the *Western Institute of Group and Family Therapy* at Watsonville, California, the *Vance Creative Thinking Center* in Ohio and Orlando and *Josephson Institute of Ethics* in Marina del Rey, California.

Ron is active in several community and church organizations in Chicago.

A great deal of his time, energy and enthusiasm goes to his exceptional wife, Sally and the families of their three sons.

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Appendix D-the written statement of Diane Berreth, Deputy Executive Director, Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Supporting Schools as True Communities of Character
Testimony Before the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families
Wednesday, March 1, 200

Diane G. Berreth, Ed.D
Deputy Executive Director
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I am presenting the views of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) a non-profit, non-partisan organization that represents educators in the classroom, in administration, and in higher education. Founded in 1943, we provide professional development in curriculum and supervision, as well as initiate and support activities to provide educational equity for all students. We also serve as a world-class leader in education information services.

ASCD is a unique organization in that our 165,000 members do not coalesce around specific professional interests or role groups. We are united around one issue--delivering the best, most effective educational approaches in the classroom, in the schools, and in educational leadership at all levels. We boast as our members many of the best, brightest, and most committed in all facets of education--superintendents, principals, teachers, professors, and others. In this regard, we frequently seek out and adopt broad-based positions and perspectives on many of the issues and problems facing education today. We also seek to engage key education stakeholders in civil dialogue about issues that reflect widely different perspectives. Our goal is to identify and promote the best practices and policies that advance educational excellence and equity.

ASCD is a strong supporter of character education because it helps unite the two primary goals of education defined by Socrates some 2,400 years ago: It helps students be good as well as be smart. Character education is increasingly important in meeting the ethical and moral challenges that we're facing in today's schools and our society.

Since the publication of the landmark report, "A Nation at Risk," 17 years ago, school reform has been high on the agendas of educators and policymakers. Yet, the reform movement has focused almost solely on the academic aspects of schooling. The balance in the purposes of schooling has been lost. We can reform schools academically, but if we create a nation of students who do not understand, care about, or act upon core ethical values--we fail. Recent studies and surveys have found that

- Over 80 percent of academically successful American high school students have admitted to cheating.
- Young people rate themselves as significantly more selfish and materialistic than they did in 1970.

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- There has been an alarming increase in hate crimes, hostility, bigotry, sexual harassment, disrespect, defiance, and peer cruelty.

Equally troubling is the breakdown in the family structure that supports today's young people. Divorce, separation, and transient relationships have become as commonplace in today's society as marriage and long-term parental commitment. Conflicts involving jobs, long hours away from home, and related responsibilities mean much less quality time between parents and children. Family meals are no longer a commonplace activity. And even simple activities—like talking, sharing experiences, and other forms of parent-child interaction—are becoming more and more difficult in today's fast-paced, time-competitive world.

The teaching of good character is primarily the task of the family. Schools, faith communities, and the community at large can supplement the family's role, but we in no way can replace the role and responsibilities of parents or primary caregivers. Schools, however, offer unique educational perspectives and support for character development—especially because our country was founded on the common, ethical grounds of a democratic society—values reflected in justice, honesty, and civility. Today, we're faced with new—and challenging—roles for schools that place them in the forefront of societal issues in addition to their traditional roles in education. This is why there is broad-based, growing support for character education in our schools through

- Federal and state supported grants to promote education in fighting drugs and crimes and measures based on ethical development and service learning.
- Mandates and resolutions relating to character education in more than 30 states.
- Business and community group support for a responsible labor force with good character traits.
- The opinions of parents (Gallup Poll–84% of parents of school-age children) who want schools to provide instruction that deals with moral behavior.

ASCD's official position on character education rests on the premise that students must be prepared to address moral issues in their own lives and to fulfill the moral responsibilities of citizenship. Schools should make basic moral values—such as justice, altruism, diligence, and respect for human dignity—a strong unifying theme. All schools should work in partnership with families and other community members to develop and implement character education programs. Our beliefs relating to character education are reflected in our actions and initiatives. For example:

- For the past 10 years, ASCD has served as a leader in the resurgence of character education. Specifically, we were instrumental in the founding of the Character Education Partnership in 1993, and ASCD currently is represented on the partnership's Board of Directors.
- ASCD has provided input to the Department of Education Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project Program.

- ASCD serves as one of the leaders of the Learning First Alliance, a 2-year old organization that represents the 12 major U.S.- based educational organizations. ASCD is serving as a key content provider on a key alliance goal: Creating safe and supportive learning environments.
- ASCD also provides educators with high-quality professional resources to support character education, service learning, conflict resolution and other approaches to ensure safe and caring schools. For example, ASCD recently unveiled a new professional inquiry kit that focuses on service learning as a way to enhance both academic and character development among students.

ASCD supports the Character Education Partnership's belief that "schools should take intentional, proactive measures to instill in their students important core, ethical values, such as respect, responsibility, caring, honesty and fairness." We join the partnership in urging Congress to support federal, state, local, and school-based approaches relating to character education. And, we specifically endorse the Character Education Partnership's three-pronged approach relating to implications for federal legislation:

- To encourage states and districts to take action but avoid prescribing specific programs or values that they should adopt. I believe that the key to this work is in the local control of programs, with each community developing consensus on its own core values and programs.
- To support additional research and evaluation of character education.
- To provide for a central source of information on best practices and programs, approaches and curricula.

ASCD also supports continuing and expanding the Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project Program:

- Lifting the cap on the number of grants that can be awarded.
- Extending the number of years that states can get funding.
- Extending the pilot project to include places that prepare teachers.
- Providing federal resources for locally developed professional development efforts for character education, including grants to schools and school districts.

We urge Congress to encourage states and districts to seek integrated, coordinated, and inclusive approaches to character education initiatives and related approaches. Specifically, policymakers need to encourage support for integrating moral values throughout the school environment. We have identified three critical elements to support effective character education in school-based environments: (1) personalization, or human-scale schooling; (2) expansion of professional development for educators, and (3) student involvement and service.

Personalization, or Human-Scale Schooling

The first—and perhaps most critical—element needed for effective character education programs

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is personalization, or human-scale schooling. Smaller classes—and smaller schools—enable schools to become communities in which teachers and students know and value each other as individuals. Schools within schools, block scheduling, mentoring programs, and the increased use of paraprofessionals create more opportunities for knowing and caring for each student.

Personalization, or human-scale schooling, also involves local and district-level support through the formation of community-based advisory groups. These groups can achieve consensus on core moral values that are shared across political, religious, and socio-economic differences (e.g., ideas contained in source documents such as the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights). And, it is equally important for policymakers to support leadership initiatives that encourage districtwide coordination and consensus among various aspects of character education delivery. For example:

- Expanding character education training to all adults in schools (including secretaries, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, aides, and volunteers).
- Seeking ways to identify good character and positive role models as important attributes in the hiring of all teachers and staff.
- Recruiting, involving, and training parents as full partners in all aspects of character education not only among school-age children but also earlier as the child's first moral teacher.
- Develop a schoolwide sense of community and responsibility by encouraging student self-government, peer mediation, and other forms of student involvement.

Expanded Educator Support for Character Education Approaches

The second element of an effective character education program is expanded professional development to encourage student engagement and involvement. Teachers and administrators need training to enhance their leadership, core pedagogy, and content knowledge in order to effectively develop good character. This specialized knowledge requires the support of not only the education establishment but the entire community. Specifically:

- Teachers need specialized knowledge, coupled with career support, on how to serve as mentors and positive role models, as well as function as facilitators of moral behaviors such as caring and respect.
- Educators need curriculum development time, and other support and encouragement to seek team-based approaches to integrate character education into not only the core curriculum but also related fields such as art, music, and various electives.

Student Involvement and Service

More students need the opportunity to practice becoming contributing citizens through service to their school, their community, and each other. The growing service education movement (which some people describe as "character education with legs") can contribute to positive learning and the re-engagement of youth involvement in the civil life of the United States. Specifically, such efforts should focus on

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- Democratic purposes of schooling. Families, educators, and political leaders need to take time to engage students in conversations about what it means to be an active participant in a democratic way of life. They need to learn about the responsibilities of being a citizen in a democracy.
- Research-based conflict resolution. Conflict resolution programs, properly designed and implemented, offer students and educators the skills to handle constructively the conflicts that naturally arise in learning situations. Peer mediation, one component of conflict resolution, is of growing importance in many successful school programs.
- New forms of education delivery. Students should also engage in moral reflection through reading, writing, and reflecting. Other approaches that are key to effective character education include team-based, cooperative learning and mentoring, as well as physical education and health-in-education initiatives relating to good sportsmanship.

In closing, there is a broad-based support for character education in schools across political, religious, and cultural differences. Everything we do in schools teaches values, whether by design or default. The question is not "Should schools teach values?," but "Which values" and "How well will we teach them?" Good character means leading a life of right conduct in relation to self and others; it is values in action. We urge Congress, educators, parents, and communities to support and promote character development in all phases of home, school, and community—and we urge all Americans to seek broader understanding of shared core values and ways to act upon them for the future of all young people, and of our democracy.

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Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Diane G. Barrath, Ed.D.		
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?	Yes	No X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes X	No
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997: Policymaker Partnership - see #7.		
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development		
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: Deputy Executive Director, staff position		
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?	Yes	No X
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: Policymaker Partnership - assists in the implementation of (IDEA) - to develop a coordinated public information campaign which conveys the themes of IDEA 97' in the amount of $10,000.00. Source is the National Association of State Director of Special Education, through the US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs.		

Signature: Diane G. Barrath Date: 4/23/00

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

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Diane G. Berreth

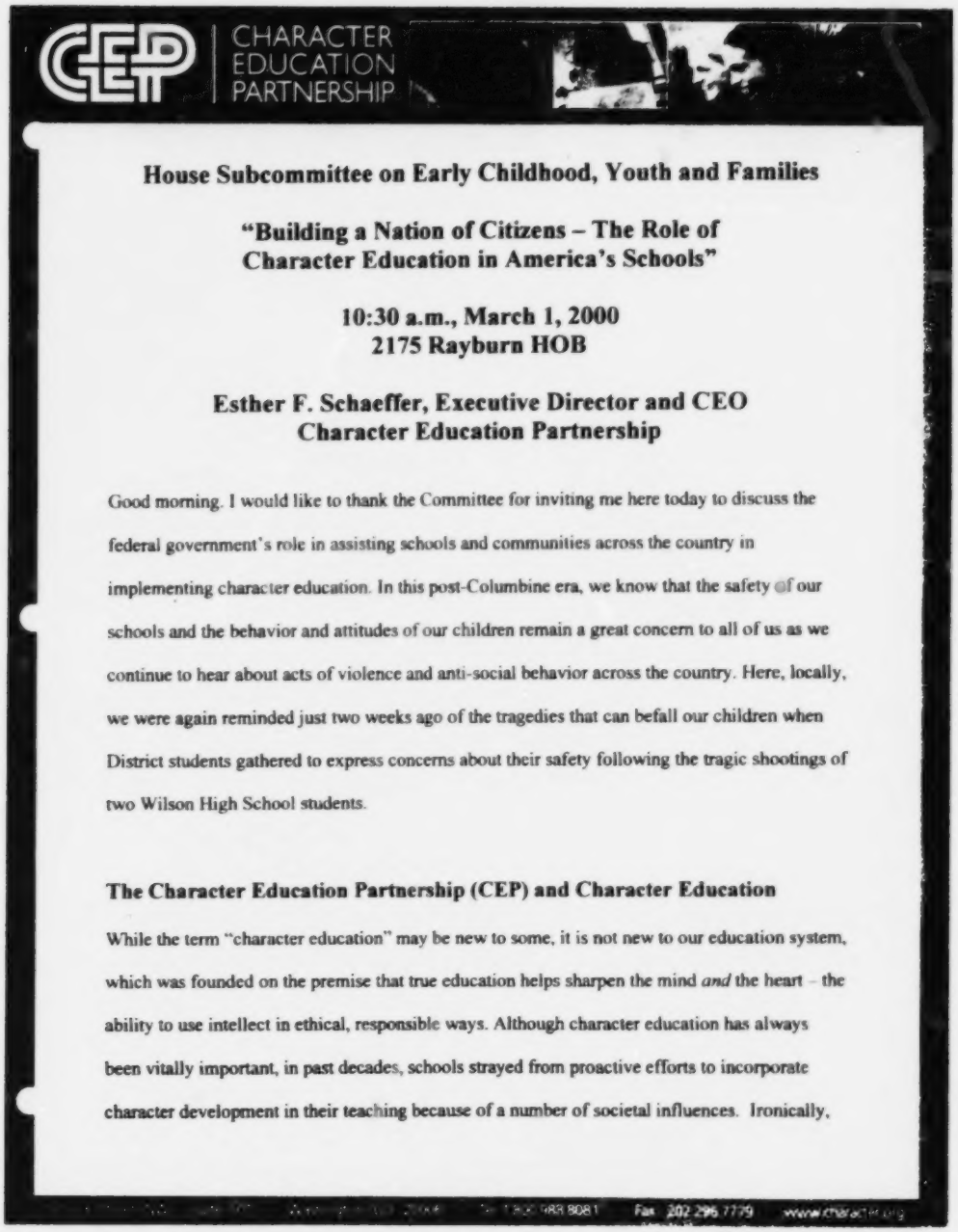
Diane Berreth, well known as a leader in the field of education, has served as Deputy Executive Director of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) since 1990. Dr. Berreth's numerous and varied appointments and honors include having served as delegate to the Annual White House Conference on Character Building for a Democratic Civil Society (1995-98). She was also President of the Character Education Partnership, Inc. (1993-97), an advisory member of the National Council of the National History Standards Project (1992-94), and, most recently, advised PBS on a planned documentary entitled *Character Education: A Classical Approach* (1998). Dr. Berreth received the Dean F. Berkeley Emerging Leadership Award, given by Indiana University, in 1991.

As Deputy Executive Director of ASCD, Dr. Berreth co-founded and served as president of the Character Education Partnership, Inc., a national coalition supporting the teaching of civic virtue and moral values. She is also co-chair of the Task Force on Empathy and Self-Discipline for the Communitarian Network's White House Conferences. Dr. Berreth joined ASCD in 1982 as Director of Field Services. Under her direction, the ASCD affiliate program became international, growing to encompass several nations including the United Kingdom, St. Maarten, and Singapore, and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Alberta. During her first four years at ASCD, she implemented several new initiatives including the policy analysis program to address such critical issues as charter schools, state curriculum mandates and national school reform, and ASCD Networks, a growing program serving the special interests of members in areas ranging from teaching for thinking to arts in education. Dr. Berreth has extensive expertise in strategic planning and has, since 1984, initiated and guided strategic planning efforts for ASCD and its 68 affiliates, and for numerous non-profit organizations.

Dr. Berreth's commitment to education is longstanding. Upon receiving her B.A. in Elementary Education/Special Education from Western Washington State University, she taught in the White River School District. She earned her M.A. in Special Education from the University of Oregon. Having received her M.A., she taught in the Oregon public schools and also directed several innovative projects before attending Indiana University, from which she received her Ed.D. in Education Policy and Leadership.

Dr. Berreth continues her work as a speaker and writer, having made over 150 presentations for national and international audiences. Her many publications include articles in *Religion in American History*, *Special Education Leadership Review*, *The Responsive Community*, and in ASCD's own flagship journal, *Educational Leadership*.

Appendix E-the written statement of Esther Schaeffer, Executive Director And CEO, Character Education Partnership.



House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families

"Building a Nation of Citizens – The Role of Character Education in America's Schools"

10:30 a.m., March 1, 2000
2175 Rayburn HOB

Esther F. Schaeffer, Executive Director and CEO
Character Education Partnership

Good morning. I would like to thank the Committee for inviting me here today to discuss the federal government's role in assisting schools and communities across the country in implementing character education. In this post-Columbine era, we know that the safety of our schools and the behavior and attitudes of our children remain a great concern to all of us as we continue to hear about acts of violence and anti-social behavior across the country. Here, locally, we were again reminded just two weeks ago of the tragedies that can befall our children when District students gathered to express concerns about their safety following the tragic shootings of two Wilson High School students.

The Character Education Partnership (CEP) and Character Education

While the term "character education" may be new to some, it is not new to our education system, which was founded on the premise that true education helps sharpen the mind *and* the heart – the ability to use intellect in ethical, responsible ways. Although character education has always been vitally important, in past decades, schools strayed from proactive efforts to incorporate character development in their teaching because of a number of societal influences. Ironically,

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that neglect came at a time when the need for nurturing virtue became greater as our society began presenting more challenges to raising moral and ethical children.

Only about a decade ago, amid a period of widespread reflection and introspection about our society's moral character, the modern character education movement began emerging when a number of forwarding-thinking educators recognized the need to restore the role of character development in our nation's schools. It was during this period – in 1993 – that the nation's leading character educators founded the Character Education Partnership to help lead the character education movement. Toward the end of the 1990s, character education began gaining momentum as a growing number of Americans learned about its purpose and potential, and as the incomprehensible spate of school shootings across the country punctuated the need for a change in our society and in our schools.

As a national advocate and leader for the character education movement, CEP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian coalition – or umbrella organization – consisting of more than 1,000 organizations and individuals who are committed to fostering effective character education in our nation's K-12 schools. Our membership includes the nation's leading education organizations and our board is made up of corporate leaders and experts in the field of character education. Our mission is to help develop moral character and civic virtue in our nation's young people as an essential way of promoting a more compassionate and responsible society. Our members are part of a growing national movement that is creating schools that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people by modeling and teaching good character through emphasis on universal values that we all share. We believe that schools should take intentional, proactive measures to

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instill in their students important core, ethical values such as respect, responsibility, caring, honesty and fairness. Schools that effectively implement character promote core values in all phases of school life, and use strategies and practices that help children not only understand core values, but care about and act upon them. They use character education to shape the core values that guide the learning process and form the foundation for academic excellence. Character education, thus becomes a part of their overall school reform and improvement efforts.

In order to advance the character education movement, CEP's primary goals are first, to provide authoritative leadership and advocacy to advance character education as an essential aspect of education reform throughout the U.S., and second, to provide schools and communities with information and resources for developing, improving, and sustaining excellent character education programs.

To achieve these goals, CEP provides research and resources to policymakers, character educators, education leaders, the media, and general public, while also setting high standards and recognizing quality issues nationwide. We know there is a vast need for information about character education because we are seeing a dramatic increase in activity through our Character Education Resource Center. In just the past two years, monthly visits to our website have escalated from 2,000 to more than 5,000, and during the past six years, our Annual Forum has grown from a handful of attendees to hundreds.

We also know that character education is not just an issue for educators; we know that an overwhelming number of Americans are deeply concerned about our society's morality and the

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safety of our children, and that they want our nation's schools to share in developing the character of our young people. Poll after poll show that Americans place issues such as ethics and morality high on their list of concerns, and various studies show that more than 90 percent of the population believes schools should share in the role of developing good character. Additionally, Americans want Congress to restore moral values and improve education more than any other issue, as evidenced by a 1998 poll by the Tarrance Group and Lake Snell Perry & Associates. Also, it is clear that a growing number of states recognize the importance of character education. Numerous state boards of education address character education, and our research shows that, at a minimum, 37 states have formalized their intent to emphasize character education in their schools. Additionally, several states are currently pursuing legislative measures to mandate character education.

CEP certainly applauds the growing interest in character education; however, amid this rush to meet public demands and fulfill mandates, we caution that we must keep an eye toward quality and effectiveness. As administrators and educators scramble to identify ways to address character development, they are faced with difficult questions: What are effective approaches that will work in their schools and communities? What role should districts and states pursue to be certain character education is implemented well?

CEP does not advocate a specific approach or program. However, we strongly urge that character education follow a set of principles that establishes a framework for initiatives that are comprehensive and inclusive. In fact, perhaps the most important message I can leave with you today is that we have found that to be *effective*, character education cannot be an "add-on" and

cannot be done in isolation; it should be infused throughout the entire school curriculum and culture, and through collaboration with the entire school, parents, and key members of the community. Our experience shows that character education works best when local schools and communities work together to identify the core values to be taught in their schools, as well as the particular approaches to teaching those values.

Schools that are successfully infusing character education into their curriculum and culture are seeing dramatic transformations: cooperation, respect, and compassion are replacing violence, apathy, and under-achievement. They are seeing a decrease in discipline problems and vandalism, and an increase in attendance, more peaceful environments, and in many cases, improved academic achievement.

The recommendations that follow below are drawn from CEP's *Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education™*, which were developed by leading character educators in the nation. Although representing a wide spectrum of political and philosophical beliefs, the individuals who created the *Eleven Principles* agreed on the key elements of character education, and found common ground in developing standards and practical guidelines for building quality and sustainable character education initiatives.

Implications for Federal Legislation

As an increasing number of schools, districts, and states across the country are mandating character education, there exits a pressing need to assist the field in identifying workable approaches and strategies. We believe there is much the federal government can do to help

schools and districts make wise choices and avoid duplication of efforts and resources, and thus, respectfully submit the following recommendations.

1. The federal government should encourage states and districts to take action, but should avoid prescribing specific programs or values that they should adopt.

Encourage Action

The modern character education movement was initially begun through the independent efforts of individual schools. Their initiatives have been critical in drawing attention back to the essential role schools previously held, and must now regain, in the social, moral, and ethical development of our children. Individual school action, however, is not adequate. Many schools found that they did not have sufficient information, professional development, or the modest financial support needed to mount an effective program. Moreover, without an opportunity for information sharing, each school was essentially "reinventing the wheel." However, with modest funding, the *Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects* have drawn state and district attention to character education and have increased the level of activity within their states. The role of the Pilot Projects in providing states with seed money for character education has been vitally important and should certainly be continued.

The role of federal seed money remains essential because it helps stimulate state activity. Recognizing that federal dollars will remain modest – although we hope increased – CEP recommends that the legislation lift the cap on the number of grants that can be awarded each year. We also recommend that the legislation remove the cap on, or at least extend, the number of years that a state can receive funding. To receive federal funds after the first five years, the

Committee may want to consider requiring matching funds, possibly on a declining federal to state funding basis.

Finally, in order for teachers and administrators to effectively fulfill their role as "character educators," it is crucial that they receive relevant training. Since today's character education movement is reintroducing a focus that was largely absent in teacher training in recent decades, many teachers need to learn approaches and strategies for teaching character education. Additionally, our recent study, *Teachers as Educators of Character: Are the Nation's Schools of Education Coming Up Short?*, conducted in collaboration with the Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University, makes clear that students who are currently being trained to be educators and school administrators are not receiving adequate preparation to incorporate character development into their work. Therefore, since only a small number of today's educators have been trained in character education and few students who are currently preparing to be teachers are receiving training, we urge that federal legislation stress the importance of professional development. Legislation should underscore the need for training school personnel in character education and should encourage state and local education agencies to use federal funds to provide professional development for teachers and other staff.

Avoid Prescribing Specific Programs or Values.

Character education requires broad support in order to be effective. Thus, it is crucial to include wide spread participation and an opportunity to reach *consensus* when selecting the values that will be emphasized in a particular school and community. Character education initiatives can be

strengthened when administrators, teachers, and support staff all participate with parents and other community members in identifying the values they hold most important. While there are a number of key values that most schools, districts, and communities often select, and while the values listed in Section d.1 of the current legislation are among those most often named (especially respect, responsibility, and caring), not all schools and communities attach the same importance to all of the same values. Some choose more extended lists and place differing degrees of emphasis on different values. Additionally, it is important to allow each an opportunity to assess their own needs and desires and identify the values that will help to meet their specific goals. Thus, to allow for an inclusive process that can help foster "buy-in," and as a result, help broaden commitment to character education efforts, it is best for the federal government to allow for flexibility in selecting values to be emphasized.

Most importantly, federal legislation should not mandate, or even encourage, specific programs or curricula by name. When specific programs have been written into legislation in some states, even as suggestions, schools and districts have felt pressured by the purveyors of these programs to use their materials. Instead, schools and districts should be encouraged to identify their character education goals; review existing practices that can help them achieve their goals; identify gaps that need to be filled; and then select the programs or curricula that can best enable them to reach their goals, and if desired, develop their own approaches. Our experience shows that some of the strongest initiatives are in fact those where schools have developed their own approaches, imbedding character education into their regular academic curricula, extra-curricular activities, governance, and interpersonal relationships.

2. The federal government should support additional research and evaluation of character education.

To date, only very limited resources have been devoted to research in the field of character education. Most research has focused only on specific programs or various elements of character education, such as violence prevention. A number of studies have shown impressive findings, but they are limited. For example, several evaluation studies of *the Child Development Project* (CDP), an elementary school project created by the Developmental Studies Center in Oakland, CA, found that alcohol use declined from 48 to 37 percent, cigarette use declined from 25 to 17 percent, and marijuana use declined from 7 to 5 percent in schools with comprehensive CDP programs. Additionally, academic motivation, positive feelings about school, active classroom engagement, and positive classroom interactions, all increased significantly in schools effectively using the CDP model. These effects appeared to carry over as students continued into middle schools, which do not have formal character education programs, though they should. Also, as reported in a 1997 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, students trained in *Second Step*, a character-based violence prevention program, used less physical aggression, less hostile and aggressive comments, and engaged in more pro-social interactions than peers who were not exposed to the curriculum. While there is a scattering of impressive findings, there has not been an effort to synthesize what is known about successful practices in the ethical development of children or to identify the gaps in our research base. More funding is sorely needed for this type of analysis and to commission further research to fill the gaps in knowledge. This is an important national need and one that the federal government can best address. Evaluations from the states that are receiving federal funds can be helpful, but they are largely piecemeal assessments of their own efforts, and are not rigorous or extensive enough to address

the information needs of the field. The U.S. Department of Education certainly should be encouraged to make their findings widely known, as I believe the Committee is considering; however, if the field of character education is to progress as needed, far more quantitative and qualitative research about existing programs and effective approaches is required.

3. The federal government should provide for a central source of information and dissemination on best practices and programs, approaches, and curricula.

Section b.3.G of the current legislation requires each state to establish a clearinghouse for information. While many states may desire a resource center with materials teachers and administrators can use and share among practitioners within the state, efforts to develop comprehensive, independent state information centers have proven duplicative and inefficient. Funding and personnel resources are far too limited to make these individual state information centers effective. Yet, as I pointed out earlier, practitioners certainly need information on best practices and available materials, as evidenced by increasing visits to our website and resource center. They also require a means to network within and among the states, regardless of boundaries and resource limitations.

To meet the growing need for information, we urge the federal government to facilitate the development of a consistent, reliable, information source that is uniformly accessible to all that are seeking information about character education. The field would most effectively be served by a resource cente.: that facilitates the compilation and dissemination of information on model character education programs, best practices, and materials and curricula to support implementation of effective programs. The resource center should include an online, searchable

database, hotlinks to relevant websites in character education and related fields, and opportunities for electronic networking. It should also provide information assistance and referrals for technical assistance by telephone.

We hope that these recommendations will be of value as you consider legislation regarding character education. Please know that CEP stands ready to assist you. We have been extremely encouraged by the dramatic changes that character education is making in schools across the country. While character education is not a panacea – nothing is – it is truly making a significant difference in attitudes and behavior, academic achievement, school culture, peer interaction, and parental involvement in a growing number of schools. Character education is creating environments where negative and anti-social behaviors are less likely to flourish or go unnoticed or unreported. Character education is creating schools where children feel safe because they are in an atmosphere that values respect, responsibility, caring, and honesty – not because a guard or metal detector is posted at the door. After all, character education is helping to foster in young people what – in the end – counts most: a heart, a conscience, and the ability to know what is right and what is wrong.

We applaud your attention to this most important issue.

Committee on Education and the Workforce
Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Esther F. Schaeffer		
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?	Yes	No X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes X	No
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997: None		
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: Character Education Partnership (CEP)		
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: No elected office. I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Character Education Partnership		
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?	Yes	No X
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: None		

Signature: Esther F. Schaeffer Date: 2/28/00

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

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Biography
Esther F. Schaeffer, Executive Director and CEO

CHARACTER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

A nonpartisan, nonsectarian coalition

Esther F. Schaeffer serves as the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Character Education Partnership (CEP), which is a nonpartisan, nonsectarian collaboration of organizations and people promoting character education in America's K-12 school systems.

Ms. Schaeffer is recognized as a leading national authority on what schools across the country are doing to teach values and good character to students, particularly about public attitudes toward teaching character development in schools, how schools nationwide are implementing character initiatives, and how communities can build consensus to support character initiatives.

Ms. Schaeffer has authored numerous articles on character education which have appeared in publications of such organizations as the National School Boards Association, National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the Ethics Resource Center. She has also overseen the development of a number of recent CEP publications on community involvement, assessment and teacher education and character education.

Formerly, as an executive at the National Alliance of Business (NAB), she headed programs concerned with the business community's interest in improving public education to prepare students for the work force. As Senior Vice President of Policy and Economic Research, she oversaw research and policy development work which focused on identifying trends in public education and the workplace, and their implications for business and government. While serving as senior Vice President of Education and Workforce Quality, she directed all education, school-to-work transition, and employer-based training. While at NAB, she authored many publications on training, education and employment.

Ms. Schaeffer has served as a consultant to business and non-profits, including the Communitarian Network, Marriott Corporation, and New American Schools. She has also worked in the federal government, overseeing implementation of the $1 billion Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act at the Department of Labor, and serving as Chief of Performance Review for the Interstate Commerce Commission.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Mrs. Schaeffer graduated summa cum laude from Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

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Appendix F-the written statement of Mr. Andrew Shue, Co-Founder, Do Something.

Testimony of Andrew Shue
Co-founder of Do Something

Chairman Castle, Representative Kildee, Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Andrew Shue and I am the co-founder and Chairman of a national organization called Do Something.

Do Something was founded on the belief that young people have the energy, idealism and power to transform our communities … and that we all share the responsibility to provide them with the skills and opportunities to become active citizens with strong values.

Today, I want to share with you how Do Something is inspiring and empowering young people across America to be leaders in their communities and active citizens for a lifetime.

While we provide a number of tools to young people – from funding to curricula to Internet resources – today I'd like to focus on our character education initiatives.

THE DO SOMETHING KINDNESS & JUSTICE CHALLENGE

Three years ago, Do Something launched the Kindness and Justice Challenge, a character education program that encourages students to perform acts of kindness and justice for two weeks in honor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday.

Students learn important values like respect, compassion, responsibility, nonviolence and good citizenship – and put these values into practice by performing positive acts in their schools, homes and communities.

With the assistance of leading national education organizations, Do Something developed a free Educator Guide with easy-to-use daily lessons and a special website where educators and students can access resources, share stories and report their acts of kindness and justice.

In the first three years of the initiative, more than 3 million students and 20,000 educators from all fifty states participated in the program, and students registered more than 5 million acts of kindness and justice on our website (we have provided each of you with a report on participation in your state).

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITIES

Through efforts like the Kindness and Justice Challenge, Do Something is developing young people's core values and character … improving classroom behavior … increasing parental involvement … and uniting students of different races, backgrounds and social circles behind positive activities and community action.

Across America, young people are mentoring their peers, providing food and clothing to the hungry and reaching out to friends in need:

In New Jersey, a sixth-grade class "committed to mentoring first graders for a year … listening to them read, helping them with class projects, and serving as role models."

In Washington State, an entire middle school – both students and faculty – collected 10,631 items of food and $470.90 in cash for the local food bank.

In Texas, a 16-year-old student named Emily wrote, "I became a peer counselor for a girl whose family is going through a crisis. I have opened my phone line to her 24 hours a day, and anytime she needs a place to escape, she and her sisters are more than welcome at my house."

These are a few, yet powerful examples, of what young people can achieve if we simply encourage them to take positive action and provide them with the opportunity to get involved.

ROLE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The success of the Do Something Kindness and Justice Challenge is the result of the passionate commitment of thousands of educators … the participation of enthusiastic parents … and the financial support of civic-minded businesses.

We strongly believe that businesses, nonprofit organizations and government all have an important role to play in providing meaningful character education in America's schools … and public-private partnerships are essential in developing these initiatives on a national scale.

Our success is based on building these collaborations, guided by a few key principles:

(1) flexibility, local ownership and local control;
(2) effectiveness across diverse communities (from Newark, NJ to Felton, Delaware to Beaver Dam, Wisconsin);
(3) measurable outcomes from character to school behavior to improved academic performance; and
(4) cost-effective implementation and scalability.

These principles should be the guide posts for our continued success.

OUR FUTURE: STUDENTS' DREAMS

Last December, as we prepared to launch this year's Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge, we asked students across the nation to tell us their dreams for a better world … and how they planned to do something to make their dreams a reality.

Thousands of students shared their dreams with us … and it is their voice, rather than mine, that I want to leave you with today.

Gina, a 17-year-old from Tennessee wrote to us:

"My dream is that we all learn to love one another regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual preference. My dream is that we learn to hold our brother's hand instead of holding him down, that we learn to pull people up instead of putting people down. We have to make this dream a reality because the only way for us to live to our full potential in the twenty-first century is by working and living together as brothers and sisters. We can make this dream a reality by doing the small things: smiling at a stranger, listening as they cry, volunteering with the less fortunate, standing up in the face of discrimination or eating lunch with the girl no one seems to care about. As soon as we realize that everyone is special and everyone has their own unique gift we can be sure God will bless our land. We can make this dream a reality, we have to, so that America's spirit, and thus its greatness, never dies."

CONCLUSION

Do Something believes that every young person – like Gina – has the power to change the world.

All of us – policymakers, civic leaders and businesses – have the responsibility to honor her dream and provide her with the tools, values and opportunities to make her dream a reality.

I strongly encourage the Subcommittee to reauthorize the Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project Program.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Andrew Shue		
1. Are you testifying on behalf of a Federal, State, or Local Governmental entity?	Yes	No X
2. Are you testifying on behalf of an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes X	No
3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997: none		
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you are representing: Do Something, Inc.		
5. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with the entities disclosed in question number 4: Chairman of the Board		
6. If your answer to question number 2 is yes, do any of the entities disclosed in question number 4 have parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities for whom you are not representing?	Yes	No X
7. If the answer to question number 2 is yes, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which were received by the entities listed under question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: Since October 1997, Newark (N.J.) Do Something, a chapter of Do Something, Inc. has received $55,000 per year as a result of a contract with the Newark Public Schools to carry out character education work. Newark Public Schools received funding from NJ Department of Education through USDOE's Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Project Program.		

Signature: Andrew Shue Date: 2/28/2000

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony

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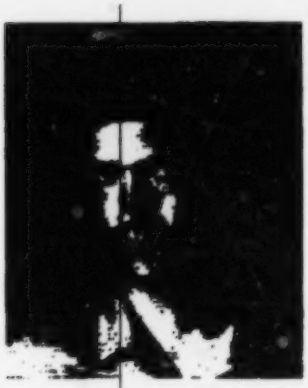

Andrew Shue

Actor; Activist; Athlete; Entrepreneur. Since graduating from Dartmouth College in 1989 with a degree in History, Andrew has succeeded in many fields.

For six years Andrew starred on the hit TV show Melrose Place, and made his feature film debut in Francis Ford Coppola's The Rainmaker.

As a community leader he is co-founder and Chairman of the national non-profit Do Something. Do Something has inspired and trained millions of young people to take action as responsible citizens. Over the last seven years, Andrew has been instrumental in raising millions of dollars and forming strategic partnerships with MTV, Fox Television, Blockbuster Entertainment, and America Online.

His passion for community involvement was developed in high school when he founded Students Serving Seniors, a group dedicated to matching students with senior citizens. Thirteen years later, SSS is still thriving at Columbia High School. In 1990, Andrew spent a year teaching high school math in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

As an athlete, Shue has committed 25 years to his first love: soccer. He has played professionally for the top team in Zimbabwe as well as serving as a pioneer player / spokesman for the Los Angeles Galaxy and Major League Soccer.

Andrew also co-founded and raised initial capital for International Sports Publishing Inc., which produces MLS Gameday programs and produced the only daily newspaper during the 1994 World Cup. He co-founded Shue Media, Inc. with his brother John, and is currently co-producing an Imax movie about World Cup Soccer.

He was named one of ten outstanding young Americans by the Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1995 and received an honorary doctorate from Drew University also in 1995. Andrew is married to Jennifer Shue and is the proud father of two boys, Nate and Aidan.

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Additional Submissions

Testimony of Andrew Shue

Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives

March 2, 2000

Do Something asked educators and young people from across the country to share their work in making their schools and neighborhoods better places, especially their participation in the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge.

Responses came from all parts of the country and depict the stunning variety of ways that young people act as leaders in their communities.

These submissions reinforce Andrew Shue's testimony about the need for a youth-owned movement supported by all sectors of society and demonstrate the depth of local commitment in very different communities to giving young people the tools and opportunities to be leaders.

Correlation between Do Something and Federal Character Education Outcomes

Reducing Discipline Problems

"At the beginning of the year, we found a note on the girls' bathroom wall that threatened to blow up the school. Because of the Columbine tragedy, we take this kind of problem very seriously. For this year's Kindness & Justice Challenge, we modeled the non-violent philosophy of the civil rights movement. We used the curriculum and watched black and white films of the marches. Students began to treat each other with the same dignity and respect they saw in the films. For the two weeks of the program, we didn't have any disciplinary incidents." – *Lake Forest High School in Felton, DE*

"We used the Kindness & Justice Challenge curriculum with the whole school this year. It's our second year in the program. Our school focused on conflict resolution throughout the year, and the Kindness & Justice Challenge has fit right in to this focus. We have had fewer fights because of the program." – *Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in Flint, MI*

Improving Students' Grades

"I teach in the Robert Taylor Homes Housing Projects of Chicago. I teach second grade and my kids who normally never did any homework really got into the Kindness &

Justice Challenge. They thought it made school more relevant. The kids wanted to do the program for the rest of the year. At the end of the year, we always sit on the top of our desks and share our favorite memories of the year. Last year several of them remembered the Challenge." – *Longwood School in Chicago, IL*

"Do Something offers my students a movement to belong to -- it offers them a chance to act and to be heard and to be recognized as valuable and necessary partners and leaders in our community's growth. Do Something shows my kids -- many of whom had never been positively recognized, or many of whom had left school, been on parole, had babies at home to care for, never thought their opinions or actions mattered-- that they as young people have the power and the obligation to work for a better future. Through the success of Do Something, our school – often looked at as a dumping ground for lost or troubled kids – has gained a community-wide reputation for service and caring for others." – *From Options High School in McAllen, TX*

Increasing Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities

"This was our third year leading a Saturday clean-up day at the school. Mount Vernon School has 1,200 students, our first year 120 students participated and we've had more participate each year since then. We've always done projects around the school grounds: raking, painting, and erasing graffiti. Students lead the entire process – planning, organization, follow through, and reflection. These small projects have an amazing effect. The first year neighborhood residents saw the activity and joined in the kids' projects. The community really respects the kids' accomplishments. The school looked unbelievably beautiful. It was graffiti-free for months afterwards." – *Mount Vernon Middle School in Newark, NJ*

Increasing Parental and Community Involvement

"I can't begin to tell you how much this program has enhanced my student's lives, our classroom community and my own personal growth and reflections! Each day the kids and I spend time engaging in so many meaningful conversations which arise from their our experiences in response to the activities which you provided in the curriculum! The kids not only enjoy the activities but they really listen to what they have to share with one another. We have even made a large 'KJ METER' which the kids record our acts on. It is displayed for all to see at school. The parents are thrilled my class is participating and I am sharing the word throughout my school and community about this national challenge!" – *Westfield Center Elementary School, Ohio*

"A parent committee helped teachers to implement the Kindness & Justice Challenge this year by counting the school's acts of kindness and justice. We hung up the acts around

the schools, covering all the hallway walls with students' acts. Now when students walk down the hall, they can see how they made a difference. Sometimes they're so interested, they bump into each other. Having parents involved made all the difference in the world. It made teachers more willing to implement a new thing and made the effort truly school-wide." – *Wenonah Elementary School in Lake Grove, LI*

Inspiring Faculty and Administration Involvement

"In many respects, Do Something is the reason I have chosen to become a principal again. At my previous school, we had our share of tragedies, which put a tremendous strain on our students: four student suicides, two murders on school grounds, six bombing threats and significant racial problems. Do Something gives us an opportunity to change the culture at our school and create an environment where students connect with each other, connect with adults and connect with their community. Do Something gives students a sense of purpose, a feeling of belonging and a reason to believe they can make a difference and have a positive impact on their surroundings." – *Springfield High School in Springfield, IL*

"One of our teachers was recently diagnosed with melanoma. She's only 24 years old, and the whole school has taken the news pretty hard. During the Kindness & Justice Challenge this year several classrooms independently decided to raise money for melanoma research. The kids decided that this was a positive way they could help Ms Anderson. Now the whole school has gotten involved. We've placed canisters in each classroom that say 'small change can make a big difference.' The kids' work has really helped the school deal with this situation." – *From an elementary school in Santa Clara, CA*

Improving Student and Staff Morale

"It is amazing to watch teenagers try to come up with ways to be kind to others. They scramble in everyday writing down their acts so they can be recognized and tell others what they have done. Students who usually enter the classroom discussing a lunchtime fight now enter discussing money they donated and children they helped. They are volunteering to help tutor younger students, they are interpreting for other students in [their] first languages, they are buying lunch for less fortunate students, and this is only the beginning. It is easy to see that they feel good about what they are doing. I am even considering continuing this with my students all year long." – *From a high school in Stockton, CA*

"We have tried to model *lokahi*, the Hawaiian word for harmony, peace and unity. We have tried to show *Aloha*, respect and love, and *Kokua* or help. These are the Aloha

values that work hand in hand with what this challenge is all about. Thank you for involving youth in a most positive way! Because of the interest, they have learned about Dr. King and have learned what injustice is. They can relate to this because of the many races they represent: Hawaiian, Filipino, Samoan, Laotian, Japanese, Portuguese, English, Scottish, Norwegian, Black, Native American, and more. *Imua!* (In Hawaiian that is a cheer that means-Move Forward!)." – *From an elementary school in Hale'iwa, Hawaii*

Responses from Young People & Educators

From BEAVER DAM, WI

Do Something has made me a better person, it has encouraged me to be a young leader and support other people. With the impact Do Something has made on me, my parents consider me to be more responsible. Do Some thing has been fun and educational to my fellow class mates and, of course, me. I think with the impact it has on others Do Something should be in at least one school of every town. It is so powerful if it were world-wide it would be one of the least reluctant activities ever. With its support there will be more "Dreams" like Martian Luther King's.

- *Stephanie Schulz, Age 10*

From ALLIANCE, OH

We haven't raised thousands of dollars at our school, or reached every kid with our message. But little things are starting to happen, like signs of spring after a long winter.

My kids are learning the most valuable lesson in life: that they have the power to make a difference, to make a positive impact on people's lives. They arebeginning to believe in themselves and in their own capability to change the world. And as an educator, I know that there is no greater gift I can give to them.

- *Julie Moffett, teacher at Minerva High School*

From MILBANK, SD

A sixth grade student brought this program to the principal's and my attention and helped organize the activities for our homeroom advisor/advisee time. She was instrumental in encouraging her classmates to participate. She did something for rest of the school that

spread to home and community as well. She is a true leader and caring, committed advocate for kindness and justice. Her teachers and classmates, as well as the whole school community, benefited because of her advocacy of this program. We started late this year, but next year MMS will continue to participate and build our commitment to this program.
- Andrea Meyer, School Counselor, Milbank Middle School

From LOS ANGELES, CA
The most touching stories that the children in my class shared were those that told of kindness and justice in everyday acts.

- I had one child clean up the house for his mother while she napped because she had been caring for her aging mother all day.
- I had another child who told the class who was stealing our beloved Pokeman cards, even though the child was his friend and it was hard to tell on him.
- I had many children take care of younger children and siblings so that their parents could have a break.

Kindness and Justice is a part of all of our lives. We can make many changes in our world if we think about individual acts that can change what it means to be a neighbor and a citizen.
-Dolores Patton, Teacher, Open Charter School

From KANSAS CITY, MO
Richardson Accelerated School in Kansas City, Missouri took the Kindness & Justice Challenge seriously.... and took it to our streets. A local radio station, KPRS "HOT 103 JAMZ" initiated a city-wide contest to help sponsor the K&J Challenge. Our school decided to win the contest and performed 4824 acts of Kindness and Justice. We participated in these activities:

1. We held a Pep Rally and invited dignitaries from the greater Kansas City community to come and support our school's efforts, including representatives from the Mayor's Office, D A R E. Officers, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco, National Coalition for Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, Crime-Stoppers, local ministers, the Boys' and Girls' Club, and other concerned community members.

2. We planned an all-school demonstration march to a well-known 'dangerous' corner just 2 blocks from our school.... to protest drugs, gangs and violence... complete with a police escort, fire dept. escort and signs.

3. Students have continued to work in the community - even though the contest is over. We are continuing our weekly clean-up crew activities and have planned a visit to a local senior citizen activity center.
- Richardson Accelerated School

From NEW GLOUCESTER, ME
My fourth grade class raised over 2,000 non-perishable food items for our local food pantry. They did this from Sept. through December. This random act of kindness was a huge success for the food pantry and in the hearts of my 17 students!
- Holly Tremblay, teacher, Memorial High School

From JERSEY CITY, NJ
There are 50 freshmen enrolled, who in their junior and senior year will be able to take college courses at Hudson County Community College. These fifty students decided that they were going to give to their community so they adopted a local child care center that houses terminally ill babies and children. They spend time with these children and they read to them. They do bimonthly toy and baby supply drives for the center, they help decorate the center for different holidays and occasions.
-Liberty High School

From VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
The Kindness & Justice Challenge helped the students to focus on the intrinsic as well as extrinsic rewards for positive behaviors. Our most meaningful act was when a student actually broke up a fight and helped the victim rather than joining in as he usually did. Another student called 911 when a neighbor was injured (instead of simply ignoring the situation) and waited with the person until help arrived. Both of these were 6th grade students who would have behaved differently in the past.
-Larkspur Middle School

From RALEIGH, NC
The G. L. Wiley Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society was given the charge to coordinate a Kindness & Justice Project. During January 17-28, 2000, the NJHS members led the G. L. Wiley Middle School students, faculty, and staff in a variety of activities to support the Kindness & Justice Challenge.

During the week of January 24-28, the entire school was encouraged to perform acts of kindness and justice. Daily focus was given to values held in high esteem by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: responsibility, respect, compassion, honesty, nonviolence, and moral courage. Daily activities included: discussing the meaning of one of the aforementioned values and encouraging everyone to exemplify that value; NJHS members commended individuals and recorded the individuals' names as they were observed performing acts of kindness and justice; NJHS members continued performing and recording their personal acts of kindness and justice.
- GH Wiley Middle School

From JACKSONVILLE, FL
What I would like you and Congress to consider is the implementation of life skills as a resource in our country's elementary schools. Each February we tie in the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge. We can illustrate to congress the impact of such a focus on a regularly scheduled basis. It is also highly economical in that it combines Physical Education and Guidance. When children are taught to be effective communicators respectful of diversity at an early age, they are given life skills.
- Kimberly J. Wise, M.Ed., teachers, Andrew Robinson Elementary School

From ORLANDO, FL
We believe that exposing the student body to the positive things going on in the school has encouraged more of the same kinds of behavior. One of our students learned that a foreign exchange student had been swindled out of her money by her host family and had no way now to buy Christmas presents or even call home! The student got some students together and took up a collection to help raise some money for the foreign exchange student to help her through the tough time until she could be placed in another home and get more money from her home country. The young lady that coordinated this effort took it upon herself to help out a fellow student without any suggestion from an adult.
-Kathie Mahan, Chain of Lakes Middle School

FROM AMENIA, NY

One of the most effective parts of your program is building the "Wall of kindness." It helps the children notice each other's qualities. It also makes them feel proud as they bring in "blocks" from home telling ways in which their families appreciate them. At the end of the two weeks we come to a whole class decision as to how we can together make a difference by helping our community. This year the class decided to collect food for the local food pantry.

Learning a bit about our history helps the children understand something of the ways in which it was possible to treat people differently, for no just reason. We talk about the ways in which we are similar and celebrate the diversity of our differences.

- Jennifer Jaffe, Amenia Elementary School

From HIGH POINT, NC

Our students participated in a symbolic "walk" from Selma to Montgomery, AL. Students, faculty, and staff were given feet when caught doing a random act of kindness or justice. They then placed their name on the foot and it was posted in the cafeteria. Along the wall were street signs beginning in Selma, marking stops along the way, and ending in Montgomery. By the end of the challenge, students had been recognized for over 400 acts of kindness and justice. We were please to participate in such an exciting opportunity.

- Shannon Brown, Welborn Middle School

From BELLEPORT, NY

While the Kindness & Justice Challenge was highlighted and parts of the curriculum were incorporated where appropriate, we viewed this as a process rather than an event, and continue to practice the principles of kindness and justice in our own classroom. We continue to volunteer at a local Day Care Center. My students have gained more than just the experience of child care as a possible career option. They have learned to share and respect the cultures of others. They have learned the importance and impact of kindness towards these children and have received the appreciation of the preschoolers and staff of the Day Care Center. My students are "at risk" youngsters, and have been able to open their hearts to these "at risk" preschoolers Watch for us in the news!!

- Janine Woods, instructor, Eastern Suffolk BOCES

From GULFPORT, MS

Teachers have noted students reminding each other about something being unkind or unjust and encouraging each other to make a better choice. During the Kindness & Justice Challenge, students reported a variety of actions that were helpful and kind, such as helping older or younger or infirm individuals in different ways.

- Rachel, age six, heard in church about a family without adequate furniture and asked her parents to give her youth bed to the child without a bed. Rachel did not have a new bed when she generously gave her own bed away, she started sleeping with her sister.
- Katie, seven, gave all of her money to a fund for a firefighter who had become disabled.

- Teresa Allen, Guidance Counselor, Bayou Elementary

From LOS ANGELES, CA

We learned the value of sharing and caring, and we are trying to practice it every day. If we find someone crying on the school yard, we try to help. If we see someone's mom carrying something heavy, we offer to help. We water the plants to let them grow tall and pretty, which makes our community beautiful. If we see an older person on the bus, we will offer our seat. Three of us did this on different occasions. We try to find kindness in the people around us and support its continuation. Like a seed, we want to nurture kindness and help it grow.

- Jody Krupin, 32nd St. USC Magnet School

From LANSING, MI

Our third grade class at Post Oak School, Lansing, Michigan has cooperated to produce a movie and CD encouraging other kids to drink milk and not to waste it. In addition the students have done many deeds of kindness in the school and neighborhood.

- Mrs. Krause and Mrs. Riddle, Post Oak School

From LEBANON, NJ

Our school is very small about 96 children. Our sixth grade class has volunteered to be learning partners to the First grade class. They will visit about twice a week and read with them and do other projects.

- *Lebanon Borough Elementary*

From BEAVER DAM, WI

I've seen Do Something impact our school in so many ways it is hard to enumerate them all. I've watched being a captain transform a shy, intimidated girl into a self-confident one who will tactfully confront others about their behavior, initiate a state-wide drive to restore wetlands, speak confidently in front of large groups, and spearhead our school's participation in the Kindness & Justice Challenge. I've also seen a second grade classroom take charge of making sure students have someone on the playground to play with so that everyone can enjoy their recess appropriately, students cleaning scuff marks off the hallway so the halls will look nicer, and groups of students initiate a helmet safety awareness program for the first time in our community. These are all things I did not see happening at our school before we became involved in Do Something. They are also only a short list of the many community-building projects that are occurring in Beaver Dam. The impact I have observed in students, both in daily behavior changes and overall attitude, has been nothing short of spectacular.

- Teri Dary, Jefferson Elementary School

From CHARDON, OH

Our school participated in the Kindness & Justice Challenge by conducting a five week program for our students and staff in grades K-5. We had 1,096 Acts of Kindness or Justice! We're very proud - this was our second year of participation.

- Dorrie Keough, principal, Hambden School

From RED OAK, IA

My children love to visit the nursing home. They have learned not to judge people by their looks. They tried to be kind and non- violent to their classmates and friends, just like Martin Luther King.

- *Charlotte Wetzel*

From ARCADIA, CA

I have 6th and 5th graders in a Special Education class for learning disabilities. They gained many positive experiences from participating in Do Something. All of the students agreed that they felt proud, good about themselves and happy about being helpful and kind to others. They learned about sharing, and to not be selfish. It has been an excellent learning experience for them.

- Mindy Pfeiffer, teacher, Holly Avenue School

From WARRICK, RI

I am pleased to say that this is the second year that I have participated in the Kindness & Justice Challenge. It provides my students the opportunities to reach out and join students everywhere. In addition, I combine this with a unit on tolerance. We discuss Martin Luther King Jr 's values and his wish for equality. We discuss how everyone has prejudices, some good and some bad. We take a look at how we treat the people around us and we question how and why we discriminate. It is a powerful time when students self-reflect and look on their fellow "man". It is truly amazing when the "report" back to me and decide that they want to discuss a TV show, a song or something that they may have previously handled differently. There appears to be a light turned on when they discover what we sometimes don't say may mean to another human being.

- Darilyn Gorton, teacher, Gorton Junior High School

From WINDSOR, VA

Our students were very excited about the acts. Our Student Council Association modeled the examples by creating a vignette aired our closed-circuit television production. The encouragement by peers made the attempts more meaningful. Some teachers encouraged participation in the classroom thereby creating lots of opportunity for documentation. Our motivating wisdom quote was, "Charity begins at home and spreads abroad." Our participants were in Kindergarten through grade five.

- from P. Conley

From MILAN, MO

This is my third year participating in the Kindness & Justice Challenge, but my first year teaching here. I saw my students' eyes open to finding opportunities to help others, not for what they could gain from it personally, but out of kindness. That aspect of the program is, in my opinion, the most important point. We may have only had sixty small acts of kindness this year, but next year my plan is to involve the entire school district, K-12, in the challenge.

- Pattie Reitz, Milan C-2 High School

From DES MOINES, IA

As a teacher in a Catholic school, I like the way the Kindness & Justice Challenge reinforces the values that are important to our parents. The program puts the focus on

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important values and raises the awareness of the students about what they are doing and can do for others. The most meaningful acts performed by my students included standing up for someone who was being made fun of, telling the truth about a matter of serious concern, and including students at lunch who had no one to sit with. In addition, at home they did things for their parents without being asked, including doing cleaning chores, fixing dinner when parents were tired, and warming up the car for them before they went to work. I want my students to understand that their whole lives are a Kindness & Justice Challenge and that we all benefit when these values are practiced.
- Mary Riordan, Holy Trinity School

From VANCOUVER, WA
Our school, like a lot of society, is "rough at the edges." Put-downs feel more powerful to students than compliments. The Kindness & Justice Challenge was an opportunity for staff and students to validate their acts of kindness. It was very successful because it's the little acts everyday that makes a school warm, secure and orderly.
- Judy Hudson, school counselor

From FARGO, ND
During our all-school Monday Meetings, we focus on the themes of kindness and caring for about 4 weeks. During Kindness Week, we do some type of care project. For the 2000 school year, we chose two projects which we named "Cents for Sight" and "Help for the Homeless." We have found it a very positive experience to provide our students with the opportunity to be "givers" to the community!
- Maggie Mitzel, Hawthorne School

From CHANUTE, KS
Tyler Haight, 6th Grade: I've learned to pick up trash on the ground even if it wasn't me who put the trash there. I would have never done this if it wasn't for the program. It's helped me to help old people take out their trash, help with groceries and maybe help them cook. I think this program will work for kids in the future like me.

Zach Rhine, 6th Grade: This program helped me. I started helping people more and to be more responsible. I do dishes. I clean my room. I carry bags for my mom.

Bryan Waggoner, 6th Grade: The other day I helped a kid because he was getting picked on. I thought, "All he wants is a friend." I helped him out. It made me feel very good.

about myself. The program helped not only the school, but us because it helped us realize that everyone has the same feelings. Now at school I see the bullies will pick on the other kids then someone stronger will help them out.

Dwight Tenpenny, 6th Grade: I think the dosomething.org helped us in a lot of ways. It helped us in some ways we can explain and some ways we can't. It helped us to do something for somebody even though they don't do anything in return. It's not because you have to or want to it's because you can. God gave you the ability to do these things so do them. He didn't put you into this world to make rude comments or fight. If we all never agreed this world would be a total disaster. If everybody agrees we could make this a better place. Not only will the person that you did something kind to feel happy, but you will feel happy and proud inside because you did a good deed and that makes you a good person.

Kalyn Kustanborter, 6th Grade: For instance you could walk down the hall and not hear one bad thing that was being said. If you were to walk in Royster during the time we were doing that activity you would be amazed. The things you would have seen...people opening doors for each other, commenting on what others were wearing. All I am trying to say is if people were as nice as this all the time this world would be a much better place.

Jesse Smith, 6th Grade: Our class has adopted a local nursing home as a way to show kindness, compassion and caring for the elderly. We create artwork to decorate the rooms, halls and common area. We recite poetry, sing songs, play musical instruments, read books, and generally entertain them in any way we can. We talk with them, we push them in their wheelchairs to and from their rooms, and we try to let them know we care about them by listening to their stories, by telling them ours, and by giving lots of smiles. We feel good about ourselves when we can bring a little ray of sunshine into the lives of those who have so much wisdom.

- Gail Petersen, 6th Grade Teacher

From MANCHESTER, TN

Our school, Coffee County Central High School, experienced a very meaningful two weeks this year when we were involved in the Kindness & Justice Challenge. Last year our school performed approximately 4,000 acts, however, this year we had much greater involvement from the entire school and performed over 15,000 acts. We were thrilled. Some of our acts included supporting our local Good Samaritan program with a canned soup drive called the "Souper Bowl." We also had many students to make monetary

contributions to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. It was nice seeing some students who don't participate in other activities to become very involved in this program. Thanks for the opportunity to involve our kids in sucha great program.
- Joyce McCullough, Coffee County Central High School

From DELAWARE, OH
Junior ROTC students at Rutherford B Hayes High School in Delaware, Ohio (north of Columbus) adopted a community nursing home and visit regularly to conduct programs for the aged and elderly. Programs consist of remembering our veterans on special occasions like Veterans Day and Memorial Day with readings, flag folding ceremonies, poems, and patriotic contributions from our past. We also place US flags at the cemeteries on special occasions. We spent two weekends in December collecting food for the community needy as part of the People In Need (PIN) Program. Finally, we serve as ushers for all community service events conducted in the public school system through the school year and the summer. We help people park cars, find their way to the event and guide them throughout the various facilities--frequently escorting the aged and/or handicapped.
- Gary Chilcott, Teacher, Producing Better Citizens for America

From MADISON, CT
Joslynn Noyes, Grade 3: On Saturday, I worked at the soup kitchen. I made juice, a cake and served rolls. When you do something for someone or help someone that is an act of kindness.

Leah Lettieri, Grade 5: I volunteered to be a tutor to third grade students in my school during recess. I recruited other classmates to help also. It is an act of kindness because I am helping third graders in my school.

Rachel Hawkins, Grade 3: I was walking on my street with my mom and found some trash on the way. I always had trash cans on my street so I decided to pick it up. I though that who did this had to be littering, I think they knew that. Picking up trash is an act of justice - doing the right thing.

Greg Choma, Grade 5: I went to the soup kitchen with my CCD class and helped out the poor. It was an act of kindness because I helped those who were less fortunate than us.

Matt Sasso, Grade 4: My friends house had a fire. They lost everything. They came to my house and I gave them a box of toys. This was an act of kindness because I gave away my toys to make my friend happy.

Virginia Pitler, Grade 5: I helped a very sick 7 year old with a brain tumor laugh and giggle all weekend. This was an act of kindness because I let her do things she's never done and I did the right thing by giving up skiing for a weekend to play with her.

Chelsea Newton, Grade 5: I live on a farm, and during lambing season there is always one sick lamb. I sat with it and nursed it back to health over the course of four hours. It was an act of kindness because I rescued its life. It was having trouble breathing at first and now it is walking around the barn.

FROM CALEDONIA, MS

In addition to recording acts of kindness and justice, students also had the opportunity to enter an essay contest and an art contest. These contests allowed students to create a dream of their own. Winners were selected in each of the four grades and the winning students received awards. The winning essays and artworks were displayed for the other students to see.

- Caledonia High School

From COPLEY, OH

This suburban four grade level middle school organizes community projects that they implement during the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge as part of their Character Counts Curriculum.

Two projects this year of which they are especially proud included the students, as members of the school-based Girl Scouts, serving meals on Sunday at the local Red Cross to the indigent. And students donating after-lunch pennies toward their goal of raising $400 to send two cancer victims to Camp Quality summer camp.

The students who provided the most acts of kindness last year had the opportunity to meet with Yolanda King and this year will have lunch with a Nobel Prize winner, Bishop Desmond Tutu.

- Helena Sturkey, Copley Fairlawn Middle School

From BEAVERTON, OR

Our classroom has children with various disabilities including, learning disabilities, Autism, ADHD, BiPolar Disorder and CP. My students are very familiar with people giving extra help to them. We decided to give extra help back to others.

Since September we have been going to a senior citizen retirement home. Each month we play Bingo, do art projects, visit or just help out. The responses I have gotten from the students has been exciting. All students report how much better they felt about themselves when they helped someone else. I try to impress upon my students that when you put good energies into the world, good energies will come back to you. I feel that it is my job as a teacher to show how important it is to be part of a solution rather than part of a problem. I am proud of each and everyone one of my kids and I have listed their names below...

Justin Coccorese, Andrew Culp, Amanda Baker, Dustin Vandehey, Tim Lavinger,Kevin Griffin, Christopher Aguilar,Ryan Bailey, Kevin Goulet, Stephanie Leach, John Henry Grove, Sam Sutherland, Megan Sanford, Don Bloch, and Nathan Santoyo.

- Sean Brennan, Whitford Middle School

From SPENCER, IN

Students in my club at school looked for opportunities to make a difference in others lives during this time. I particularly noticed that they were really aware of acts of injustice to others---and tried to help students who were being picked upon, harassed by others. The Kindness & Justice Challenge Curriculum caused them to focus on how they could make life better for others---and they looked for ways they could do this. They were keenly aware of mistreatment of fellow students by others. It was encouraging to see their concern for others.

-Dianne Shewmaker, School Counselor, Owen Valley Middle School

From ESCONDIDO, CA

Last year my 7th grade students participated in the Kindness & Justice Challenge. We put little hearts with our initials all over the classroom for every act of kindness. It was beautiful to see that my room looked like a Valentine card. After the Challenge was over my students wanted to continue. Because they loved to share their acts of kindness with each other, I had to limit the activity to once a week. The Challenge took on a life of its own. Kids started to not want to pick the best act of the day, but just appreciate all of the acts that kids performed. They began to defend each other's acts as the best acts. They really liked random acts of kindness the best.

One student and his mother had just driven out of a Carl's Jr. parking lot when my student saw a homeless man, sitting in a wheelchair, holding a cardboard sign. Before his mother had a chance to say anything to him, my student jumped out of the car and handed the homeless man his unopened Famous Star. He told us that he was extra proud of his act of kindness because he had to defend his action to his mom. When she finally understood and appreciated what he had done, she offered him her sandwich. He smiled to tell us he refused her burger.

- Heidi V. Tillinghast, Hidden Valley Middle School

From BLOOMFIELD, CT

Our class participates in this campaign by entering our acts of kindness and justice into a special journal. Each day my 19 first graders write what they have done throughout the day, anything from paying a compliment to a friend to helping someone up because they fell. There are far too many acts to list as our class tallied up more than a total of 735 acts of kindness and justice. The Kindness & Justice Challenge drew their attention to the necessity of consideration for others for an entire 10 day period, long enough to really take hold and make a difference. This is the second year I have participated in this campaign and feel that it is well worth the effort and time we put forth. I support this type of "character building" wholeheartedly!

- Elizabeth Zidel, J.P. Vincent School

From SPRINGFIELD, VA

It's my pleasure to share with you how the "Kindness & Justice Challenge" has improved the lives of my students, their families, and our classroom. First, the daily lessons help them begin to understand abstract notions like "fairness," "service," and "justice." Second, they begin to put these emerging understandings into practice as they strive to be kind and justice at school and at home. We ask the students to keep track of their kind and justice acts at home and bring in one paper snowflake (created with a computer graphic--each child gets a sheet full of them) for each act. Every day, during our morning meeting, the children tell each other about their acts of kindness and justice. They learn from each other what it means to be kind and just! We also track kind and justice acts at school. We encourage children to look for ways to be respectful, caring, and fair to their classmates.

- Gail V. Ritchie, Kings Park Elementary School

From SAN ANTONIO, TX

Our action means a lot for my students, because they are learning how to research an important issue, network within our community, and plan and execute meaningful action, in the process of contributing to a city-wide effort. We have all come to understand that an accurate census count would be a major act of kindness and justice for our community. San Antonio was recently singled out by Kenneth Prewitt of the Census Bureau for our city-wide Census Committee's comprehensive approach, involving schools, community orgs, and churches. My Do Something group was impressed to learn this and proud of their part in the effort.

- Vikki Cravens, Jefferson High School

From MONA SHORES, MI

Kindness and Justice are difficult concepts to explain to anyone, let alone second graders. Last year when we participated in the Kindness & Justice Challenge, my class worked extra hard to make the playground a kind place to play. We focused each day on another aspect of how to create a better world in our small classroom. An elementary playground sounds so benign, yet we all remember the little incidents that affected our childhood. Many children found our playground a safer place and a fun place to be. We've always tried to instill good life skills in our students, but this gave us a concrete method of building up all the skills children need.

- Jackie McClain, Mona Shores Public Schools, Churchill Elementary School

From QUAKERTOWN, NJ

I did the Kindness & Justice Challenge with my second graders this year. It really opens up the awareness of being good to each other and making another person feel happy and proud of who they are. The students learn good ways to communicate with others and when problems do come up they remember the things they learned which of course helps them solve their problems. I feel teachers need to start this program when the students are young and continue it as the students go through school.

- Janet E. Prassl, Franklin Township School

From SUGAR LAND, TX

Our students raised over $1,600 to help defray medical costs for a fellow student who is in need of a critical surgery with no insurance. The entire school raised over $10,000 for this same effort by recruiting donations from families and community members.

- Vicki Johnston, principal, Townewest Elementary

From CHATSWORTH, CA
When I came home after my graduation as a Do Something Community Coach, I knew that my life would never be the same, but what has surprised me in these past months is how many lives have been changed by this amazing organization. Although Sierra Canyon has had a dynamic and meaningful service learning program since 1995, we have incorporated the Do Something curriculum into our school in a way that has enriched our students, staff, and parents.

Since the students are selecting Do Something as a class, each group has a wonderful mixture of personalities, skills, talents, and strengths. I have watched in awe as introverted, passive students have wordlessly approached the dry erase board and comfortably grasped the scepter of leadership--the dry erase marker--and conducted a brainstorming session. I have witnessed with wonder as the coolest, hippest athlete bonded with the most cerebral intellect in order to select music for a dance (we have made our own CD, it is all appropriate music and lyrics, and we fondly call it the Do Something Party Mix), and they discovered that they have the same taste in music. I have been inspired by the radiance of students who have struggled with academics but are natural leaders, and they have found their places in the sunlight. I have been humbled by observing kids who got off to a bumpy start because of behavioral issues, but because they were determined to grow and mature, they developed into devoted leaders who taught us all about the ability to change.

The impact of Do Something has been manifested in both concrete and nonverbal ways. Reflection has become more deeply ensconced into our service learning program, in fact, one of my students has reworded the precepts of the Path to Change, and we say "See it, plan it, do it, review it!" We journal after every session, and across the board, final entries talk about how sad the students are to see the class end. Seventh graders are already talking about signing up again next year, and everyone is reassured when I tell them that the end of the session is not the end of their involvement in Do Something. I continue to call on them for help and feedback, and I encourage them to think about becoming community coaches when they are older.

Many parents and members of our staff have commented on the overall effect of the program--that the whole school seems more invested in making our activities successful because they are designed and managed by the students, that we have raised the level of awareness about how to treat others, that we do all believe that everyone has the potential to be a leader and that young people can change the world, and that my students remark

that being in Do Something has been one of the most positive experiences they've ever had. As students beg to change their schedules so they can join my class, I know that the word is out--DO SOMETHING IS IN!
- Shelley Deutsch, Community Coach and Coordinator of Service Learning, Sierra Canyon School

From CHESHIRE, CT.
The benefits of the Do Something program are countless...we're announcing great acts on our morning ICS (student tv announcements) to promote Martin Luther King's spirit all year long. At our Town Meetings, we began Gotcha! (caught being good) to continue the sentiment all year long. Students are more aware of how what they do affects others and how every act and every person can make a positive difference in our world.
- Tracy Ajello, Doolittle School

From NEW CITY, CA
Our students focused on acts of kindness and justice for the full two week period following Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. One student, Perry Hopman, spread the news of this event at a local radio station interview at station WLIR in Nanuet, NY. Each morning another virtue was discussed during the morning school announcements and each teacher followed up with discussions in the classrooms. Our school maintains a peer mediation and conflict resolution program run by one of our student assistance counselors, Mrs. Janet O'Shea. Our entire Kindness and Challenge program was coordinated by our teacher, Mrs. Elisa Goldman. When children are taught values such as honesty, responsibility, moral courage, and service to the community, we remind the children of these parts of the Kindness and Justice program. This has been a fabulous way to keep alive the values and morals of Dr. King. We have participated in this event for the past two years and look forward to it each year to re-kindle our efforts in this regard.
- Alan Lipman, Principal, New City Elementary School

From CABOT, AR
At Cabot Middle School our 585 fifth graders include 3 African American students. We are one of very few schools in Arkansas that do not celebrate MLK day out of school. To "bring home" the importance of the man and his deeds, in computer lab we visited the Do Something site (as we did last year). The children listened to a tape of "We Shall Overcome" and were introduced to concepts of change through peace and persistence. On the hall we built a Wall of Dreams. Each student wrote a dream on a red

construction-paper brick, and we watched the wall grow. Dreams ranged from having a more cooperative family life to saving the rainforests... Each child determined what his/her dream would be and how s/he could help bring about a positive change. We read stories of Martin Luther King's childhood so they could realize they, too, could grow and bring about change...
- Lael Harrod, Cabot Middle School

From NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ
Some of our favorite acts include:

- Julie Azcona is a regular volunteer at our districts' soup kitchens (Elijah's Promise Ebeneezer Baptist Church). She served as a judge in a mock trial during the K&J Challenge to draw attention to the escalating incidents of vandalism. This activity involved 5 classes and was a good lesson on how our judicial system works and every citizen's responsibility in helping it to work. An account of this was written by Julie for our school's newspaper.

- James Cano, a 3rd grade bilingual student found a 1st grader's cash picture money and returned it.

- Carlos Rivas, a 1st grader found $100.00 cash that was earmarked for the PTO. He returned it to a teacher. Although this happened before the K&J Challenge, it was announced on the PA system and written up in the school newspaper which was distributed right before the challenge. We were delighted to see his act of honesty copied several times.

- Christine Sullivan

From PARK FOREST, IL
I find the program is quite helpful to my students. My class consists of nine students who are labeled as Behaviorally Disturbed/Emotionally Handicapped. The students usually know how to verbalize correct behaviors; however, it is not always easy for them to act upon the correct behavioral options. When the program was explained, they expressed their desire to participate and parents were informed of our need for their support. We have done the following activities: 1. Made Kindness and Justice books to take home. We did this by making copies of the student record sheets. Parents sign the forms and assist their children in recording daily acts of Kindness and Justice. 2. The children formed teams and role-played some of the situations listed in the manual. They

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enjoyed this activity. It encouraged them to be positive with one another and to practice giving compliments. 3. We made a bulletin board of Kind Words and Just Acts an one of Hands Up For Kindness and Justice. 4. We begin our day discussing how we can use integrity in making decisions. We then focus our journal writings on moral value words. Some of the words we have used are integrity, fair, incorruptible, sympathize, honesty, perseverance, compassion, sharing, justice, unity, love, and impartiality

- Donna Juniel, Blackhawk Elementary School

From CONWAY, AR

Students at Vann Elementary School in Conway participated in the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge in the following ways:

- Helping younger students with reading and math.
- Cleaning up neighborhood parks and bike trails.
- Accompanying a Meals on Wheels delivery and giving a hand made
- card to each one of the shut-ins.
- Visiting a nursing home and playing bingo witht the residents.
- Made cards for terminally ill students at Arkansas Children's Hospital.

- Jo Ann Ratliff, Vann Elementary School

From BEACON, NY

Our second grade class decided that they needed to really celebrate Dr. King's Birthday. We wrote Biographies about him, then since Valentine's Day was coming soon we filled a red heart with acts of kindness we did for our friends and relatives. We filled the heart with 95 good deeds.

- Sandra Moneymaker, JV Forrestal School

From INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Our children were very focused on doing something kind for one another and reaching out to be truthful and just both at home and at school. We had the students fill out a 3x4 slip of paper every time they performed a kind or a just act, which in turn was displayed on the cafeteria wall for all to observe as they ate and walked through the cafeteria. Our students did close to a 1000 kindness and justice acts that were on display and they were still writing them and putting them in the designated box after the week of Kindness and Justice had ended. So in order to keep that wall occupied we wanted to give something to the community and so we had the children do a Fund-raiser within our building for Riley

Children's Hospital. For one week in February we raised about $500.00 with the children buying a heart attached to a small bag of candy hearts.
- Alesia Franklin, Bunker Hill Elementary

From BOWMAN, ND
The Fourth Graders at Bowman Middle School spent each day together reviewing the act of kindness and justice done each one involved. One way we participated was choosing the Class Act and then taking a picture of each winner that was later displayed at a business place during the two weeks.
- Mrs. Meschke and Mrs. Thompson, Bunker Hill Elementary

From LIVERMORE, CA
Listed is a web address that chronicles the Kindness & Justice Challenge at Rancho Las Positas School:

http://206.110.209.60/Kindness%20%26%20Justice%203%2F99
- Lori Sanborn, Technology Specialist, Rancho Las Positas School

From FORT LYONS, IN
More and more we are seeing students who offer a lending hand when another student drops their crayon box, spills their drink or needs the door open due to full hands.

Students on our playgrounds work to make sure that everyone is included in their games and recess activities. Students have been taught to get the lone child involved with at least one other child.

Weekly guidance lessons are provided by myself, the elementary school guidance counselor, concerning acts of kindness, problem solving skills, conflict management, and safety issues. Students are taught to use their support systems, how to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and that violence is NEVER THE ANSWER!
- South Mesa Elementary School

From BROOKLYN, NY
The Kindness & Justice Challenge was the centerpiece of our anti-violence campaign that began the previous month. Students were skeptical at first when we introduced the

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challenge to our student government but then it really took off. We had a big graph in the main lobby to record the different classes' acts of kindness, Each class began to record their acts publicly in the form of hearts on bulletin boards, stars or other symbols each class chose. We looked on with delight as students began to stop and read each other's acts of kindness and justice. Suddenly, more and more students were asking for forms to record their deeds. Students who had never acted kindly towards others were suddenly re-evaluating their behavior and speaking nicely to other students, offering help and support, thinking about their actions. Little by little bulletin boards filled up and students took pride in their contributions. The students began to become more aware of their civic responsibilities and picked up paper that had been dropped in the hallways. They cleaned off graffiti. They offered homework help to each other. They spoke words of encouragement instead of put downs. One of our children is suffering from kidney failure and we were touched by how students offered to carry her books, walk with her and make sure she got to class safely. They offered her words of hope and encouragement.

While we didn't change the world, we began to change ourselves and change things a tiny bit at a time. As we watched the graph grow and the hearts with acts of kindness and justice on them inscribed begin to fill our hallways, we couldn't help but smile, knowing the world was a little better place.

- *Amy Greenberg, I.S. 211*

From FRESNO, CA

Students at Wawona Middle School have been attempting to bring more meaning of patriotism into our school. They have written to famous people asking them to make a tape of them saying the pledge of allegiance, singing or playing a patriotic song, or doing a patriotic reading. They are beginning to understand that the government of the U.S. should be equal for all people and that justice needs to extend to everyone within its boundaries.

- Linda Nimer, Wawona Middle School

Appendix G- The written Statement of Dr. Sheldon Berman, Superintendent of Schools, Hudson Public Schools.

House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families

"Building a Nation of Citizens -
The Role of Character Education in America's Schools"

10:30 a.m., March 1, 2000
2175 Rayburn HOB

Sheldon H. Berman, Superintendent
Hudson Public Schools, Massachusetts

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families on the important role that the federal government can play in strengthening the development of character in our young people. I come here as a superintendent of schools who has worked diligently over the past seven years to help our young people develop an ethic of care and service to others. But I also come here as a researcher and author in the area of the development of social consciousness in young people. In fact, my doctoral dissertation and a recent book I published focused particularly on children's social consciousness and the development of social responsibility. In the time I have with you this morning I would like to offer Hudson's character education program as one example of how a community organizes character education and share the powerful results we had from our efforts.

Hudson is an industry-based, culturally and socio-economically diverse community. Over thirty percent of our population is Portuguese, many of them immigrants from Brazil and the Azores. We have numerous bilingual students and over twelve percent of our students come from low-income families. We are committed to character education and have made it core to our education reform program because we believe that it will create knowledgeable, ethical and active citizens who care about others and their community.

In an era of standards and accountability, character education may seem distant from the mainstream of education reform. However, American education faces a challenge that is equal to that of student academic performance. Issues of civility, character, and respect have taken center stage in many schools and communities. Apathy about and disengagement from the social and political arena are at an all time high among young people. In addition to raising performance standards that compare favorably with other countries, we need to develop in young people the concepts, skills, and sense of commitment that will revitalize our communities and our democracy.

The fact is students benefit both academically and socially from an education that integrates challenging academics with a commitment to creating a caring and civil community. This is not an either-or choice. Through making character education an integral part of school culture, we can not only enrich our academic content but also nurture an ethic of care and service in young people.

For the past six years, the Hudson Public Schools has pursued, in incremental steps, the teaching of civility, character, and social responsibility through instructional strategies focused on the themes of empathy, ethics, and service. The school district's mission is "to promote the intellectual, ethical, and social development of students through a challenging instructional program and a caring classroom and school environment."

Focusing on empathy, ethics and service gives us the opportunity to provide programs that address social development, ethical development, and the development of civic competencies, all in the context of an academic program. We have sought to embed these three themes into the fabric of each child's academic program and school experience from pre-school to twelfth grade. We have not completed our journey but we have taken a sufficient step forward that our efforts may serve to help others on the road to fostering character and social responsibility among young people.

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Character education is not simple. It's not a recitation of the values we hold dear. It's not the kind of knowledge that students learn by studying their notes. Imagine trying to teach integrity. We can model it, talk about it, provide examples of it, and hold it as an expectation, but unless we understand what inhibits and nurtures it we will not be successful in translating our intentions into reality.

EMPATHY

One of the important strengths of character education is that each community organizes its character education efforts to correspond to local values and circumstances. Hudson's character education program is framed around three values that we believe are important: Empathy, ethics and service. Empathy development forms the base of our program. Social understanding and social responsibility are built on children's desire to understand and feel effective in the social world, to initiate and maintain connection with others, and to reach out to those in distress. The problematic behavior we sometimes see in young people is a communication to adults that they do not know how to act with compassion, empathy, and sensitivity in reaction to the needs of others or in response to conflict. The skill that is most critical to the development of social responsibility is that of taking the perspective of others and the most productive instructional strategy to develop that skill is to teach young people skills in empathy and conflict resolution.

Martin Hoffman, Judith Dunn, and other researchers place the first signs of empathy during infancy. Empathy may, in fact, be an innate human attribute that is either nurtured or inhibited by the child's environment. Empathy can be developed by helping children become sensitive observers of the feeling states of others, understand the causes of these feelings, and learn appropriate ways to respond.

Hudson has been using an empathy development and anger management program produced by the Committee for Children entitled "Second Step" supplemented with conflict resolution material from Educators for Social Responsibility. This thirty lesson per grade program begins in kindergarten and involves students in role plays and discussions that identify the feeling states of those involved and helps students reflect on and practice various ways of appropriately responding to the situations. Second Step includes a parent component as well so that these skills can be supported at home. A recent study of this program, funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, found that it was successful in decreasing physical and verbal aggression and increasing prosocial behavior (Grossman, Neckerman, Koepsell, Liu, Asher, Beland, Frey, & Rivara, 1997). However, such programs as the Educators for Social Responsibility's "Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program," the Stone Center of Wellesley College's "Social Competency Program," the Developmental Studies Center's "Child Development Project," or the Northeast Foundation for Children's "Responsive Classroom" are all effective avenues for teaching these skills. In each of these programs, not only are students given direct instruction in basic social and emotional skills, but the whole school becomes involved in creating a caring community that models respectful and empathetic behavior. Through the school's curriculum and culture students gain experience in behaving in ways that are sensitive to and considerate of the feelings and needs of others while at the same time learning that there are ways to deal with differences other than avoidance or fighting.

Since our implementation of Second Step we have found a decrease in disruptive behavior and a greater sense of helpfulness and caring among students. It has also impacted the culture and climate of our schools, making them more responsive, happier places for both children and adults.

ETHICS

Although teaching skills in empathy and conflict resolution are important, they are not sufficient. Young people need to find a moral center in themselves and learn how to manage moral conflicts. The research work of Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and others has had a profound impact on our understanding of the nurturing of such ethical principles as justice and care. Their research has shown that ethical discussion can enhance moral reasoning and that placing young people in situations where they must work with real moral dilemmas within the context of a democratic community is effective in nurturing moral action. In essence, internalization and ownership of ethical principles develops through a noncoercive,

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open-minded approach that invites discussion, exchange, dissent, and understanding rather than demanding agreement and adherence.

Consideration of ethics is an area that becomes contentious for schools, with some individuals wishing to promote particular religious principles within the curriculum and others advocating for value neutrality. There is a middle path that schools can follow that respects the role of families in the province of religion yet helps students reflect on the values we hold collectively as a society. The great contribution that the Character Education Partnership and the character education movement has made to this debate is to help adults see that we can come to agreement on such collectively-held values as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, justice, fairness, caring, and citizenship. The middle path of affirming these values while engaging students in dialogue about moral issues provides an opportunity for schools to nurture moral and prosocial behavior.

Good curricula in the area of ethical development are harder to find than in the areas of empathy or conflict resolution. Hudson has selected material from an elementary literature program developed by the Developmental Studies Center in which students read literature that portrays prosocial themes. In addition, we have created a core ninth grade English-Social Studies Civics course whose essential question is: "What is the responsibility of an individual in a just society?" A central part of this course is the *Facing History and Ourselves* curriculum. This curriculum engages students in the study of the roots of two twentieth-century genocides, the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide. The curriculum confronts young people with the human potential for passivity, complicity, and destructiveness by asking how genocide can become state policy. It raises significant ethical questions and sensitizes them to injustice, inhumanity, suffering, and the abuse of power. At the same time it is academically challenging and helps complicate students' thinking so that they do not accept simple answers to complex problems. In the process of studying both a historic period and the personal and social forces that produce genocide, students confront their own potential for passivity and complicity, their own prejudices and intolerances, and their own moral commitments. The curriculum develops students' perspective-taking and social-reasoning abilities and students emerge with a greater sense of moral responsibility and a greater commitment to participate in making a difference. The only drawback is that there aren't more such curricula that are appropriate for other grade levels.

We live in a complex time. There are few simple answers to the complicated issues we face. Children become aware of the trauma in the world around them at a far earlier age than we would like and lack the skills to deal with its complexity. In our efforts to preserve their childhood, we often allow important ethical issues to go undiscussed and attitudes of cynicism, hopelessness, and powerlessness to develop. This need not be the case. Social, political, and ethical reflection build character by peeling back the layers that underlie our values and helping young people find within themselves the strengths and commitments to make a difference for themselves, others and the planet as a whole.

SERVICE LEARNING

Finally, Hudson's character education program involves giving young people the opportunity to exhibit caring behavior through service learning. Through such activities as first graders working with senior citizens on literacy activities, fourth graders studying and preserving wetlands areas, and high school physics students sponsoring a science Olympiad for elementary and middle school students, service learning engages young people in meaningful service linked to classroom instruction. It is a particularly powerful teacher of good character. Service learning helps young people make the connections between the subject matter they are studying and issues in the larger world. It not only engages students in action to help others but it encourages serious reflection on the important community, social, political, and environmental issues they are studying as part of the curriculum. As a result, it may be our best educational approach to teach responsible and participatory citizenship. Recent research and our own experience in Hudson have shown that the personal empowerment and increased sense of relevance of the curriculum that results from service learning improves academic performance, helps create a safer and more caring school culture, and nurtures ownership and pride in their community.

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Our service learning program begins in kindergarten with all kindergartners being involved in several efforts: a handicapped awareness program that extends into a "hop'ning" that raises funds for the March of Dimes; a student run recycling program tied to a environmental studies science unit; and a holiday toy drive linked to a social studies unit on community. Like our kindergarten, each grade develops its own initiatives. For example, a group of our first graders have an ongoing relationship with senior citizens at our local Senior Center that helps teach students basic literacy skills. Our third grades raise money and collect food for our local Food Pantry. Our fourth grades engage in an environmental field studies program that involves protecting and caring for wetlands and other natural areas near our schools. Our fifth graders work with classrooms of multiple-handicapped children to develop an awareness of and respect for diversity and are reading buddies for some of our first grade classes. Our ninth grade English and Social Studies teachers ask students to find a way that they can help create a just society through a service learning experience. In addition, through a collaborative of twelve school districts, we are developing a student leadership program that provides our middle and high school students with such leadership training experiences as student leadership conferences, summer institutes, and courses. These are only a sample of the many projects our teachers implemented.

The Hudson Public Schools has made a strong commitment to integrating service learning into our curriculum. In fact, we have become a leader in service learning in Massachusetts and nationally. We have developed a comprehensive pre K-12 program that now involves over 80% of our students in service learning activities each year. Our high school has won a National Service Learning Leader School Award from the Corporation for National Service and our service learning program received Honorable Mention for the National School Board Association's Magna Award. We are one of five "Expansion School Districts" selected by the Massachusetts Department of Education to support other districts in the development of their service-learning programs.

We are creating this consistent, system-wide approach to service learning so that an ethic of service and an ethic of care is sustained at each grade level from pre-school to graduation. Our goal is to provide students with service learning experiences marked by continuity, depth, and meaningfulness.

RESULTS

We have observed that our character education program has created a more caring and respectful school community where young people and adults are able to identify problems before they become crises, where student alienation and disengagement is seriously diminished, and where violence is much less likely. This kind of environment also opens the possibility for more productive, engaging and efficient learning. In fact, character development and academic progress are inextricably connected and mutually supportive. We believe that our character education program has been one of the critical factors in improved student performance. And as an added benefit, character education and service learning are preparing our young people to enter their work and community lives ready to contribute.

Character education has had a positive impact on parents as well. Parents have a deep desire that their children become good, caring people. In a recent parent survey, our parents clearly communicated how important this was. Hudson surveyed parents on fifty indicators of a successful school, asking to what degree parents valued each indicator and to what degree the Hudson Public Schools were successful in achieving each indicator. With almost 40% of our parents responding, the top three indicators selected by parents were a safe and secure school environment, fair treatment of students by staff, and a caring and supportive environment for students. An academically challenging curriculum and methods of instruction ranked fourth. In fact, nine of the top twelve indicators selected by parents dealt with a caring and responsive environment. Results of parent attitudes nationally show the same pattern. Character education creates this kind of environment for students and helps them develop the social skills, ethical understandings and commitment to making a difference to others that strengthen character.

Finally, our character education program has benefited the community as a whole and has rebuilt public confidence in and public support for our schools. We are living in a time when adults are suspicious of our youth and have low opinions of them. Similarly, as the declining civic participation among young adults shows, young people feel alienated and disaffected from our social and political community and

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withdraw from participating in this arena. Character education and service learning have provided the bridge between young people and their community in Hudson in such a way as to give young people a sense of hope, an experience of community, and a belief in their own personal effectiveness. Alternatively, it has helped members of the community understand the contribution students can make to community improvement and has brought community members in direct contact with students and the instructional program of the school. Character education has become an important bridge between the community and our schools.

A CAUTION

However, in your consideration of character education, let me offer a caution. Human beings often gravitate to simple answers to complex questions. The path to teaching civility and character is strewn with curricula that are no more than our own pleadings for young people to be good. If we are truly concerned with helping young people become good individuals and citizens, then we need to look more deeply into what it is that promotes these qualities and build programs based on these qualities. Hudson's focus on empathy, ethics, and service is an effort to provide students with the skills and experiences that can give meaning to civility for young people by focusing on their social, ethical and civic development.

Unless young people experience a sense of community, a connection to others and the earth, and see the implications of our actions for the future of our society and the planet, civility will mean little to them. Hudson's focus on empathy, ethics and service is an effort to help young people experience the sense of community that ties us together. And it is through this experience that young people begin to understand the meaning of the common good, appreciate that their actions have consequences for others and the community at large, and develop a sense of relatedness to and responsibility for the larger human community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In closing, I would like to offer four recommendations that would support the development of character education programs nationwide. First, I encourage you to sustain the funding you have provided for character education. The *Partnerships in Character Education Pilot Projects* have been effective in stimulating the development of state initiatives in character education. This support has played a critical role in raising the quality and comprehensiveness of character education programs nationally and in drawing attention to importance of character education in the context of education reform.

Second, I encourage you to provide additional funding for research and evaluation of character education programs. Although there are some character education programs that have been thoroughly researched and evaluated, most show little research support for the interventions they propose. A synthesis of current knowledge as well as new research in this area would advance our understanding of what programs and interventions are most effective.

Third, I encourage you to refrain from prescribing specific character education programs or a particular set of values. The strength of the current movement in character education has been local involvement in identifying a community's core values and the selection of programs appropriate to that community. It has enabled communities and schools to come together in support of a set of values they hold in common and an approach the community can support. This local "buy-in" strengthens the school's character education efforts. Prescribing a program or set of values would weaken local programs and community support for character education.

Finally, I recommend that you increase the funding for the Learn and Service America Program of the Corporation for National Service. This program provides states and school districts with the funding for service-learning programs. For the past six years, this program has been level funded as other programs within the Corporation have been able to secure additional funds. Service learning is a major element of many of the character education programs across the country. I believe it is a critical component to any

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character education effort. Students learn by doing and they need the opportunities to care about others and the environment that service learning provides.

I am encouraged that you are holding these hearings on character education. Character education can play a critical role in reclaiming our pride and confidence in public education. It can provide young people with experiences of community and connection that give them meaning and direction. It can enrich our academic program and improve student performance. Our challenge is to think of character education as we would any other systemic reform initiative and bring together the resources necessary to create broad-based implementation in our public schools. I applaud your efforts on behalf of character education.

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Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI. Clause 2(g)

Your Name: SHELDON H. BERMAN		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1997:		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a Government entity?	Yes	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: HUDSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, HUDSON, MA		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing?	Yes	No

Signature: _____ Date: 2/28/00

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

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PERSONAL INFORMATION: Please provide the committee with a copy of your resume (or a curriculum vitae) or just answer the following questions:

a. Please list any employment, occupation, or work related experiences, and education or training which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:

Sheldon Berman has been the Superintendent of the Hudson Public Schools since 1993. Prior to coming to Hudson he was a founder and President of Educators for Social Responsibility. He is the author of *Children's Social Consciousness* and *Promising Practices in Teaching Social Responsibility* as well as numerous articles on character education and community service. Hudson High School has been awarded the National Service Learning Leader School Award from the Corporation for National Service and the school system has a comprehensive K-12 character education program. Dr. Berman serves on the Board of Directors of the Character Education Partnership, Educators for Social Responsibility, and the Education Commission of the States' Compact for Learning and Citizenship.

Dr. Berman received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madision and his Masters and Doctorate in Education from Harvard University. After college, he taught high school social studies in Bangor, Maine, and Brookline, Massachusetts.

b. Please provide any other information you wish to convey to the Committee which might aid the members of the Committee to understand better the context of your testimony:

Please attach to your written testimony.

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SHELDON H. BERMAN
66 Ash Street
Concord, MA 01742

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Superintendent of a public school district of 2800 students from culturally and socio-economically diverse backgrounds. Initiated curricular innovations in service learning, character education, mathematics and science reform, high school restructuring, and the use of computer technology. Provided the entrepreneurial management that increased competitive grants and donations to almost $1 million per year and the leadership to help Hudson become a leader in education and a site for research and development in instructional improvement.

Developer and Co-Principal Investigator for the U.S. Department of Education Technology Challenge Grant "The Virtual High School Collaborative," developer and Principal Investigator for the Massachusetts Department of Education Technology Challenge Grant "Mobile Inquiry Technology," and Team Leader for the CESAME-funded State Implementation Program for the implementation of National Science Foundation supported exemplary elementary mathematics curriculum, *Investigations in Number, Data and Space* .

Coordinated a twelve school district collaborative to integrate social skills and social responsibility throughout the curriculum. Completed district-wide curriculum assessments, provided staff development programs, and initiated projects in character education, global telecommunication, service learning, environmental education, and student leadership.

Published curriculum materials in conflict resolution and citizen participation as well as articles on critical thinking, the development of social responsibility, and innovation in math, science and technology.

Offered over two hundred workshops and twelve summer courses for teachers and administrators.

Helped found and manage, and, then served as President of a national non-profit educational organization supporting the integration of social responsibility into the K-12 curriculum.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

SUPERINTENDENT
Hudson Public Schools, Hudson, MA — February, 1993 - Present

PRESIDENT
Educators for Social Responsibility, Cambridge, MA — October, 1986 - February, 1993

PROJECT DIRECTOR
Education and Leadership for a Non-violent Age Project
Educators for Social Responsibility, Cambridge, MA — September, 1986 - June, 1991

COORDINATOR
Boston Area Educators for Social Responsibility
Cambridge, MA — July, 1982 - June, 1985

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TEACHING EXPERIENCE: HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER
Brookline High School, Brookline, MA September, 1979 - June, 1982

SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER
Bangor High School, Bangor, ME September, 1975 - June, 1978

SELECTED BOOKS, ARTICLES, AND REPORTS PUBLISHED

The real ropes course: The development of social consciousness." In J. C. McDermott (Ed), *Beyond the Silence: Listening for Democracy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999.

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BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Educators for Social Responsibility	Member Member	Board of Directors Advisory Board	1981-Present 1993-Present
Assabet Valley Collaborative	Member	Board of Directors	1993-Present
ELNA Collaborative	Member	Executive Committee	1994-Present
Project Alliance - Middlesex County District Attorney's Office	Member Chair	Advisory Board	1994-Present 1997-1998
Concord Consortium	Treasurer	Board of Directors	1994-Present
Character Education Partnership	Member	Board of Directors	1995-Present
Assabet Valley Collaborative School-To-Career	Member	Board of Directors	1995-Present
Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents	Co-Chair Member	Special Ed. Task Force Executive Board	1996-1997 1998-Present
Education Commission of the States K-12 Compact for Learning and Citizenship	Member Chairperson	Executive Committee	1997-Present 1998-1999

EDUCATION

Harvard Graduate School of Education	Ed.D., Administration, 1993
University of Maine, Orono	M.Ed., Counseling and Guidance, 1974
University of Wisconsin, Madison	B.A. with Honors, Political Science, 1971

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ISBN 0-16-060707-8